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STATISTICS OF DISSENT.

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By Edmund

Statistics of Dissent
IN
ENGLAND AND WALES,
FROM
DISSENTING AUTHORITIES;
PROVING THE
INEFFICIENCY OF THE VOLUNTARY PRINCIPLE
TO MEET THE
SPIRITUAL WANTS OF THE NATION.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE connexion of the State with the Church is the great source of opposition and discontent to the Dissenters of modern times, and of the new schools of schism and heresy. "The voluntary principle (says Dr. Bennett, the Dissenting historian) has become their favourite watchword. Dissenters have studied to convince their countrymen that the Government should protect ALL sects, and establish none ; but leave religion to the voluntary endowment of its own disciples." This has, at different times, been the language adopted by French atheists, German neologists, and infidel philosophers. "The voluntary principle (says the author from whom we have just quoted) is not of so modern a date as its enemies would insinuate. It had long been *cherished in secret* by men who had outstripped their contemporaries ; but circumstances have recently called it out to view, and given it a bold prominence. That it should be viewed with horror, by those who had been accus

tomed to lean upon the State for support, was natural ; for they were well aware that State endowments and compulsory tithes had extinguished the generosity of Christian principle, which, in purer times, more than sufficed for the support of the Church of Christ. The *voluntary principle* has forced itself upon public notice ; and those who would willingly have left it to expire in oblivion, have been compelled to promote its triumphs by their censure ; while others, more favourably disposed, acknowledge, that, if the connexion of the State with the Church did not already exist, it ought not to be introduced."

This was the triumphant language of Dissenting chiefs, when supported, or at least encouraged, by the late Whig-Radical Government, which was wholly indifferent to religious creeds, as well as to the progress of Protestant and Evangelical truth. But Dissenters did not, and do not, stop here. They require—

1. The separation of the Church from the State.

2. The exclusion of the bishops from seats in the House of Lords.

3. The abolition of tithes.

4. The suppression of church-rates.

5. The opening of churchyards to the prayers, addresses, and sermons of Dissenting teachers, of all sects and denominations, over the graves of their varied disciples.

6. The creation of a *national* system of education, from which, forsooth, the *national* religion, *national* church, and *national* clergy, are to be excluded.

7. The remission of the duty payable to Government on all foreign timber used in the erection of any dissenting or sectarian meeting-house. And—

8. The opening of the Universities to Dissenters, without any test or qualification.

But who is it that calls for these monstrous concessions? The Committee of Dissenters of the three denominations of Presbyterians, Independents, and Baptists; the Voluntary Evangelical Church Association; the Congregational Board; the Protestant Society; the Socinian and Arian ministers excluded from the Congregational Union; the United Associate Presbytery; the *Congregational Magazine*; the Church-rate Abolitionist Society; the *Patriot*; the *Nonconformist*; and the *Voluntary*. All of these are arrayed against

the Church ; and deep and loud are their reproaches and their threats.

But these united Dissenters have as grossly exaggerated their numbers and importance, as they have the force and value of their voluntary principle. They have been so noisy, clamorous, petulant, and vituperative, that at last the ignorant or the careless friends of the Church have believed them to be numerous. It has become necessary, therefore, to ask, "Who are these Dissenters? What are their forces? Are they able to provide for the religious wants of the people? And, if the voluntary principle should be adopted by the Episcopal Church, and its connexion with the State should be severed, what would be the probable results of such a separation?"

Some answers to these enquiries will be found in the succeeding pages. They originally appeared in the columns of the *Church and State Gazette*, and have been subsequently revised by their Author. May God's blessing accompany their circulation, and may the cause of truth be promoted by their increased and extensive perusal !

DISSENTING STATISTICS,

LETTER I.

AT a meeting of the friends and supporters of the *Voluntary* Evangelical Church Association, held at the Bridge House Hotel, Southwark, on the 22nd of March, 1842, at which Sir Culling Eardley Smith, Bart., presided, some notice was taken, by the Rev. Dr. Campbell, of the *Church and State Gazette*. That gentleman, after having made some observations on the establishment of “the *King’s College*” in London being due to the previous formation of “the London University,” maintained that the establishment of the *Voluntary* newspaper had led to the publication of the *Church and State Gazette*. He said :—

“Our *Voluntary*, which has been about twelve months in being, is another illustration of the circumstances to which I have been referring. It has called forth another periodical of the same kind, but one that is opposed to us. I have no objection to advertise it (laughter) ; it is the *Church and State Gazette*—a well

got up, good-tempered periodical (laughter, and 'hear, hear.') I should recommend all our friends, who can afford it, to buy it ; but let them be sure, at the same time, to purchase the *Voluntary* (laughter). I prefer this species of conflict even to public meetings for discussion. It is the press which is moulding the millions of England. The House of Commons is a good place ; and so, sometimes, is the House of Lords (laughter) : but give me the *Times* and the *Chronicle*, those mighty organs of adverse principles (hear, hear). So here—let the *Voluntary* and the *Church and State Gazette* go forth together. We must not seek to suppress the latter, but to bring it into notice, and to court attention on its behalf. We wish it God speed, so far as it is correct, and maintains an amiable, kind, Christian spirit ; but we must carry on an earnest, a most intensely earnest and continuous conflict with it, till we see who is right."

This challenge of the Rev. Dr. Campbell we heartily accept. We desire most sincerely to carry on this controversy with the "good temper" which even our opponents admit we have displayed ; but yet our "conflict" cannot be less "earnest," or less "continuous," than that of our Dissenting contemporaries.

And, as an evidence of our determination at

once to examine into the policy and claims of the Dissenters, we have resolved on commencing with DISSENTING STATISTICS. In coming to this resolution we have adopted a line of conduct long since chosen by the Dissenters themselves. They have examined our Church statistics—we will now examine theirs. They have said that the Episcopal Churches in England and Wales are inadequate to meet the spiritual wants of the population; and we have admitted the accuracy of the statement, at the same time that we have desired to see the increase of our National Churches. They have said that the increase in our population has not been met by a corresponding augmentation of either parish or district churches or chapels of ease: and we also have admitted and deplored the fact; but it is now high time to turn the tables upon our opponents. If the Church of England has not supplied adequate instruction, or provided a sufficient number of buildings for the religious worship of the people, what has the *voluntary* principle effected, and where would the people of this country now be, if they had been left to the teachers and the meeting-houses of the Congregationalists?

We are about, then, to examine very deliberately the *Statistics of Dissenters*. That

no fair objection may be made to our criticisms, we have taken for our data the figures and facts of the Dissenters themselves. Their own periodical, one of the most able they publish (the *Congregational Magazine*), has, in its numbers for December and January last, published some valuable statistical accounts of the Congregational or Independent body ; and, as these accounts are nothing less than *official*, we have not hesitated to regard them as Statistics which Dissenters themselves will not fail to admit. It is, then, with their own Statistics that we mean to show the inefficiency of the voluntary principle to meet the spiritual wants of the nation ; that it has not kept pace with the increase of the population ; and that, but for the existence of a National and State Church, the great mass of the people would be left in spiritual darkness and death. In the course of our examination we shall show, that during the last half century the Church of England has been much more active than have the Dissenters, in providing for the spiritual wants of the people, and that the voluntary principle does not excite in its professors that degree of zeal which is necessary to provide for the religious instruction of a great nation.

Before, however, we proceed to the Statis-

tics of Dissent, as given by Dissenters, we deem it right to state, that we have carefully compared them with the parish and township statistics of the Poor Law Commissioners, and with the population returns of 1841, made at the last general census. In the succeeding portion of this volume we are about to show how very insignificant are the means of religious instruction prepared by the Congregational Dissenters, when compared with the parishes, townships, and population of England and Wales.

	Parishes and Townships.	Congregational Meeting-houses.
In Bedfordshire there are	143	12
Berkshire	189	26
Bucks	223	28
Cambridge	175	28
Chester	487	37
Cornwall	216	41
Cumberland	203	21
Derby	310	44
Devon	471	85
Dorset	284	34
Durham	280	19
Essex	412	76
Gloucester	382	57
Hants	334	92
Hereford	255	13

	Parishes and Townships.	Congregational Meeting-houses.
Hertfordshire . . .	141	36
Huntingdon . . .	106	10
Kent	423	60
Lancaster	449	138
Leicester	308	38
Lincoln	705	15
Middlesex	207	103
Monmouth	145	50
Norfolk	727	38
Northampton . . .	334	41
Northumberland . .	492	12
Nottingham	263	26
Oxford	286	22
Rutland	53	3
Salop	258	40
Somerset	483	72
Stafford	239	40
Suffolk	508	39
Surrey	150	60*
Sussex	315	42
Warwick	246	53
Westmoreland . . .	108	11
Wilts	332	62
Worcester	218	13
York	1577	216

* Including the meeting-houses of the boroughs of Lambeth and Southwark.

Thus, in 13,433 parishes and townships, of which the English counties are composed, there are only 1,853 Congregational meeting-houses ; so that in 11,580 parishes and townships in *England alone*, there are no Independent places of worship.

Let us now turn to Wales—

	Parishes and Townships.	Congregational Meeting-houses.
In Anglesea there are . . .	72	29
Brecon	103	32
Cardigan	96	38
Carmarthen	102	78
Carnarvon	73	41
Denbigh	85	29
Flint	40	20
Glamorgan	165	70
Merioneth	34	25
Montgomery	69	43
Pembroke	148	54
Radnor	62	4

In Wales, therefore, Congregationalism is much more vigorous than in England, since in 1,049 parishes, &c., there are 462 meeting-houses.

And here let us pause to make some reflections on these indubitable Statistics of Independency in *England*. It is a curious and instructive fact, that, in the *county of*

Durham, comprising an area of 1,097 square miles, with a population of 324,277 souls, according to the last census, with 57,450 inhabited houses, and with so many large towns and cities; only nineteen Independent meeting-houses should exist in the whole county. Let it be admitted, for the sake of argument, that each of these nineteen meeting-houses contain seats for from three hundred to five hundred individuals—and let us make a liberal average of four hundred. Let us further admit that these four hundred attend divine worship at the whole of these nineteen meeting-houses, and what portion of the population of the county will they then have provided for? SEVEN THOUSAND SIX HUNDRED! and no more. But we pledge ourselves to this fact, that not four thousand persons, out of 324,277 souls, regularly attend the nineteen Independent chapels in the county of *Durham*. But admitting that the whole of these nineteen meeting-houses were regularly filled, still, as far as Independency is concerned, it would leave 317,000, in one county alone, wholly without the means of instruction. Yet none are more clamorous for razing the National Church of England to the ground than the Independents and Baptists.

Take another example, that of *Cheshire*.

Cheshire comprises an area of 1,052 square miles, contains a population of 395,200 souls, and has 73,390 inhabited houses ; and yet only thirty-seven Independent or Congregational meeting-houses are to be found out of four hundred and eighty-seven parishes and townships. Let us again, for the sake of preserving our character for "good temper," admit that each of these Independent meeting-houses will hold four hundred human beings, what will be the proportion of the population of the county supplied with means of religious instruction and worship by the Congregationalists? Just 14,800, out of 395,303! And yet Dissenters would desire us to leave the religious instruction of the people to the *voluntary principle*!

The *Congregational Magazine* has only to record of the *Durham* and *Northumberland* Association of Dissenting ministers, that it was formed in 1822 ; but it might have added, that since that period, a distance of twenty years, only three new meeting-houses have been erected in the county of Durham, and that four out of nineteen are without pastors. Dissent is indeed at a discount in that county.

In the county of Chester, which is the other example we have cited, we learn, from the same authority, "that the average expense of

the Cheshire Congregational Union has been from 200*l.* to 400*l.* per annum ; but that its reports have not been published regularly." No wonder ; for what would those reports have had to record, except that thirty-seven Dissenting meeting-houses had raised each from 6*l.* to 9*l.* per annum towards furthering the cause of the voluntary system ?

There is a *third* county, to which we cannot but refer in this first letter ; it is that of the county of Lincoln. This county contains an area of 2,611 square miles ; with 705 parishes and townships, with 73,038 inhabited houses, and with a population of 362,717. How stands Congregationalism there ? Let us see. Its own organ, the *Congregational Magazine*, contains the following lamentable confession :—

"We regret to record, that this county is without an association of the Congregational churches." No wonder again ; for according to its Statistics there are only fifteen Congregational chapels in the whole county. Let us once more admit that each of the fifteen meeting-houses will contain four hundred persons, and we have only six thousand individuals, out of a population of 362,717, supplied with the means of religious worship by the voluntary Independents.

In a future letter we propose showing the

total provision made for religious worship throughout the kingdom by the Independent Dissenters ; since, when objections are made by modern nonconformists to the union of Church and State, and to the erection of additional national churches, it becomes our duty to show, that if the State is *not* to erect additional churches to meet the spiritual wants of the population, at least the *voluntary principle* is wholly unable to supply the need which exists, and to meet the spiritual necessities of an ignorant and depraved people.

LETTER II.

SIR CULLING EARDLEY SMITH, in one of his recent notable diatribes against Church Establishments, has said :—

“There is an electro-magnetic principle in Christianity, which, if Government do not interfere with it, will infallibly draw us together, and leave Oxford and Rome, and the deniers of the Trinity, and the followers of Owen, to fight out their own battles.”

We really must protest against this mode of classifying Socialism, Socinianism, Romanism, and Tractarianism together : for, bad as is Tractarianism, and sincerely as we are opposed to it, who would think of comparing the demoralizing effects of Socialism with the errors and mistakes of the former system ? Sir Culling might have thought it witty : we hold it to have been unjust. The same gentleman, who professes to be greatly concerned for the *spiritual*, but not less opposed to the temporal, interests of the Church of England, has also lately declared that if England were “to break down the barriers” that oppose the progress of true religion, or, in other words, if “she were to abolish her establish-

ment," it would "be impossible to calculate the great *spiritual* benefits which would result from such a measure." We quite agree with the sagacious baronet, that it would be quite "*impossible to calculate*" such benefits as those to which he refers, but simply for this reason, that there would be none to enumerate. Until, however, this desired, but non-desirable "breaking down the barriers" shall take place, let us continue to examine the provision which would be made by Dissent for the spiritual wants of the nation, if the wishes of Sir Culling, and his *Voluntary* Evangelical Church Associates, should be gratified. And, *first*, let us look at the COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX, with an area of 285 square miles, with parishes and townships to the number of 207, with 207,670 inhabited houses, and with a population of 1,576,616. Here is a field for extensive usefulness! But the Independents *have no visible organization* in the metropolis. Take the following quaint but correct admissions of this Independent publication:—

"The Independent churches, as such, have now no visible organization in the metropolis. The Congregational Board meets every month, but it consists exclusively of ministers, all of whom do *not* sustain the pastoral office. Assuredly, while the pastors of London are called

to deliberate on the claims of Great Britain and Ireland, the British colonies, and the heathen world, they ought to have an ostensible organization on behalf of the villages and towns that are within the shadow of this colossal metropolis."

We confess we think so too, *i. e.*, if Dissent is "to keep its head above water;" and no better proofs can be required of the decaying condition of Dissent than those which the statistics of Independency in London and Middlesex will supply. But let us first hear the Independents themselves, as they are represented by their own historian and leader, the *Congregational Magazine*:—

"At the colleges in Byng-place, Highbury, Homerton, and Hackney, there are always fourscore *young evangelists* willing to be employed; and in churches like those of London, assuredly there are as many gifted *lay brothers*, who would be willing to co-operate with their pastors in supplying the destitute places around."

The Highbury, Homerton, and Hackney students, now dignified with the title of "young evangelists," and the "lay brethren," who are *so willing to co-operate*, have not, however, in point of fact, been organized, and have not co-operated in any plan of evangeliza-

tion ; and if the “ colossal metropolis ” were left to the tender mercies, or provision of Dissent, *one-fortieth part* of the population would alone be supplied with means of religious worship or instruction.

Take the CITY OF LONDON, within the walls, with a population of 56,000 : how much accommodation do the Independent meeting-houses supply ? There are eleven places of worship, which, at an over-estimate of four hundred persons attending each meeting-house, will give a total of 4,400. The remaining 51,600 would be unprovided for. But if we were to come to particulars, and look in at the Aldermanbury meeting ; at New Broad-street meeting, where Mr. Mark Wilks, now of Paris, used to preach ‘ violent Anti-Church-of-Englandism to empty pews, or to small yawning congregations ; at Jewry-street Chapel ; at Jewin-street meeting ; at Hare-court ; and even at Barbican Chapel ; oh, what small congregations should we behold—and how palpable it would appear to every one that the citizens of London, at least, have seen no good reason for changing their attachment to the Church of England ! Even the historian of Dissent, Dr. Bennett, must feel, when comparing his history of former times with the present condition of nonconformity in the city of London, not-

withstanding all his efforts at *Silver-street Chapel*, that Dissenterism has seen its best days ; and that crowded churches, and an active Episcopal ministry, are the best replies to his sarcasms and his *quolibets*.

If we turn from the City of London to the City and Liberty of WESTMINSTER, and St. James's, Westminster, we shall there find a population of 94,000. How stand Dissenting Statistics there? There are *eleven* meeting-houses, including that of Dr. Morison, at Brompton, as well as by far the most popular of the Independent ministers in that district of the metropolis—we mean Dr. Leifchild, in Craven Chapel, New-court, Carey-street ; and most of the “causes” in these eleven meeting-houses are pining in consumption. Shepherd's-market, May-fair, lingers under Mr. Mather ; and Westminster Chapel, James-street, is supplied by students, or “young evangelists.” Yet in the whole of these *eleven* meeting-houses in the City and Liberty of Westminster, Brompton included, there is not room to pack more than five thousand Dissenters, out of a population of 94,000. *Ergo*, 89,000 are wholly unprovided for by the Congregationalists.

Next comes the BOROUGH OF LAMBETH, which the *Congregational Magazine* has incorrectly

included in the Statistics of *Middlesex*. Lambeth contains a population of 116,000. What have the Dissenters done there? Their first chapel in that extensive district dates as far back as 1688; but, though one hundred and fifty-three years have elapsed since that period, only *nine* more chapels have been erected in a century and a half; and Dissent in *Lambeth* provides by its "Congregational churches" for a population of, say six thousand (not really five thousand), out of 116,000. Deficit, 110,000.

The BOROUGH OF SOUTHWARK next claims our attention. This borough, including Bermondsey, Rotherhithe, and St. Saviour, contains a population of 82,000 souls. And what is the amount of Dissenting provision for religious worship there? It would seem that the organ of Dissent had felt the falling-off, for it has included SURREY CHAPEL and Mr. Sherman, the successor of Rowland Hill, in the list of Independent preachers and places of worship. This is "a little too bad," and we cannot assent to so extraordinary and incorrect a nomenclature. However, deducting Surrey Chapel, as a mistake, there are only in the borough of Southwark *seven* meeting-houses, of which one is Welsh, in Little Guildford-street, and the other, in Jamaica-row, is

more than half empty, under the pastoral care of Mr. George Rose. Still pursuing our system of understating the truth in our own favour, we will admit four hundred to each of the *seven* meeting-houses, and the grand total will be 2,800 persons provided for in a population of 82,000.

THE BOROUGH OF MARYLEBONE is yet more striking. This borough contains a population of 134,000 souls; and in it the Dissenters have provided meeting-house accommodation for 2,800, leaving 130,000 unprovided for! The most respectable among the Independent ministers in this district of the metropolis is the Rev. J. Stratten, whose mild spirit and Christian philanthropy would seem to indicate that a Dissenting education, rather than choice, had led to his present position.

After deducting, from the total population of the metropolitan county, the inhabitants of the city of London, Westminster, Lambeth, Southwark, and Marylebone, there still remain upwards of ONE MILLION of souls to be provided with the means of religious instruction and worship. The editor of the *Congregational* has classified this million under the general heads of "borough of the Tower Hamlets," and "borough of Finsbury." All sorts and sizes are here embodied, from

“*Messrs.*” Hyatt (a droll sort of appellation for ministers of religion), of Ebenezer Chapel, Shadwell, to Saunderson Turner Sturtevant (for *thirty* years a vendor of tallow candles in Church-street, Bethnal-green), *Doctor of Divinity*, in Hare-street Chapel, Bethnal-green! The Doctors of Divinity, indeed, appear most numerous in the Tower Hamlets, for there are the author of “No Fiction” (*Doctor* Andrew Reed), and *Doctor* James Campbell, of *Whitfield’s* Tabernacle (whose ghost will surely visit them for calling it *Independent*); besides *Doctor* James Fletcher, of Stepney; *Doctor* Burder, of Hackney; and last, though not least, *Doctor* Pye Smith, the learned opponent of the Corn Laws at the Manchester Convention.

But it is a matter of very little moment whether these gentlemen are called *doctors*—the great question is, what are they doing for the cure of souls? Remember, 1,000,000 of souls have to be cured. What accommodation do they afford in their forty-six meeting-houses? In order that no fault may be found with our Statistics, we will include Hope Chapel, Cambridge-road Chapel, Gloucester-street Chapel, and other little places of worship, in the general calculation of four hundred to each building; and what is the total num-

ber provided for out of this million? Just 18,400!! So that 981,600 souls are left unprovided for by Dissent in the Tower Hamlets and Finsbury, and in the other districts in the county of Middlesex, *not included* in the city of London, Westminster, Lambeth, Southwark, and Marylebone!! So that, out of a population of 1,576,616, these notable Dissenters—these Primitive Christians, as they style themselves, or Congregationalists, supply only meeting room for 39,400!—leaving a deficiency unprovided for of 1,537,216. Thus, as we said at the outset, *Dissent provides, by means of the Congregationalists, in the county of Middlesex, for just ONE-FORTIETH portion of the population.* But does one-fortieth portion attend? No—nor one-sixtieth. It is true that such men as Dr. Collyer, Dr. Leifchild, Mr. Clayton, Thomas Binney, Dr. Morison, Dr. Fletcher, Dr. Andrew Reed, and Dr. Burder, draw larger congregations than four hundred; but these are only the heads of the tribe. Visit, as we have done, the meeting-houses of the humbler organs of the voluntary principle in our metropolitan county, and it will be found that from one hundred and fifty to two hundred persons are the average number who attend on the Sunday morning. Many a

Dissenting minister, indeed, would have occasion to take courage, if, on the days of the *quarterly collections*, so great a number could be found.

These are the Dissenting Statistics of the county of Middlesex. They are facts which cannot be refuted. What confidence, then, can be placed in the *voluntary* principle, as capable of affording adequate means of worship and instruction to the people of this country? None whatever—none.

LETTER III.

“Look to America!” cry the apologists of the voluntary system, and the opponents of the connexion of the Church with the State! “Look to America, and there you will behold a great and a powerful nation, principally Protestant, like ourselves, speaking the same language, educated in the same principles, and supporting similar religious and moral societies, *without any National or State religion!*”

Well, then, we have no objection to join issue with these apologists of Voluntaryism on this very question of America, and we reply to these taunts by FACTS. Does Voluntaryism prosper in America? Are the subscriptions, pew-rents, collections, and donations sufficient to meet the necessary and unavoidable expenses of public worship? And are the people of the United States supplied with adequate accommodation to meet the varied opinions of many-headed schism? And the answer to this enquiry is—No. *For it is an undeniable fact, that at this present time there are between seven and eight hundred places*

of public worship, of different denominations, WHOLLY SHUT UP, because those who ought to contribute voluntarily to the support of "the cause," in each separate place, will not do so, and because, the sums raised being insufficient to pay the ministers, rent, salaries, &c. &c. —these seven hundred and fifty buildings ARE CLOSED !! This is Voluntaryism in America. And is this the system which is to supersede a National and State provision for the worship of God in our own country? No ; the State will never be thus left Atheist in this, our own blessed land ; but in spite of the fury and opposition of all her foes, that branch of the Catholic Church which has been planted in England, and which we rejoice to call *the Protestant Church of England*, will continue to exercise, by her union with the State, a vastly salutary influence over the whole community, whilst it will moralize and Christianize the State, by that glorious and indispensable connexion. We hold that this case of America is one that cannot and ought not to be lost sight of, for it is an experiment which has *signally failed*, and which is still failing more and more every day we live.

A respected correspondent of the *Church and State Gazette*, has addressed a letter to the *Editor* on our *Dissenting Statistics*. He says

that he thinks we are wrong in supposing that the Dissenters propose to supply, by their voluntary system, the means of public worship to the whole community, in a country where a State religion already exists; but that they insist that in *new States*, voluntary churches would be the best churches that could be formed; and that in *old countries* the connexion of the Church with the State operates as a "wet blanket" on the zeal and life of the Church herself. The respected correspondent in question is, however, inaccurately informed as to the views, wishes, and efforts of Dissenters. They are *not* satisfied with perfect toleration to preach and to teach their various schisms; but they insist that *real* liberty of conscience does not exist, whilst a State Church is permitted in this country. With respect to new States, we point to the 750 closed churches and chapels established on the *voluntary* principle in the United States of America. But, with reference to our own country, it is right that all men should know that Dissenters have pledged themselves, by their representatives at their unions, in their journals, at their public meetings, and everywhere, *never to rest satisfied until the Church of England shall become a Voluntary Church, unconnected with the State, and wholly sup-*

ported by pew-rents and collections. They go even the length of proclaiming that all the endowments of the Church should be sacrificed to the State, and should be applied in diminution of the national debt, and in support of a general national system of Dissenting education. When we make use of the term *Dissenting* education, we do so advisedly ; for the plan of education they would adopt would *exclude* Church principles, Church influence, Church discipline, Church books, Church prayers, Church creeds, Church catechisms, Church ordinances, and would leave to the untutored parents of millions of hapless urchins the duty they would *not* perform, of instructing their children in *their* views of Christian truth and doctrine. Yet what are *their* views? They have none.

It is greatly to be feared that many thousands of the clergy and laity in this country are not aware of the position taken by modern Dissenters : that position is one of aggression. They do not say, with the Dissenters of former times, that they respect and reverence the Church, though they cannot conscientiously communicate with her members ; but they say that the Church is a vast public and national evil, which must be rooted up and overthrown, however long and great may be the conflict

which the bringing about such a result must necessitate. It is a mistake to suppose that the Dissenters do not desire to apply the principles of Voluntaryism to the Church of England, as it exists to-day. On the contrary, that is their object ; and what would be the result? Why, in a very large proportion of the rural parishes of this kingdom, if the principles of Voluntaryism were applied to the parish churches, the sums contributed would not—could not—be adequate to meet the unavoidable expenses of public worship and the administration of the sacraments. Nor would the Dissenters, with their meeting-houses, supply the lack which would then exist of both preachers and churches. Not only is Dissent now unable to provide, by its voluntary principle, for the spiritual instruction of the nation ; but if, by the introduction of the same principle into the Episcopal Church of Great Britain, the spiritual instruction of the nation should be left wholly to Voluntaryism, though the Church would lose her ground, Dissent would not be able to occupy her place. The Dissenters of our times are engaged in propagating three capital and disastrous errors : first, that a National and State Church is a great curse to the country ; secondly, that there exists no neces-

sity for a State Church as the instrument of supplying all classes of the people with religious knowledge, and with the sacraments established by the divine Founder of Christianity ; and, thirdly, that if the Church of England should be no longer allowed to exist in England as a National and State Church, Voluntaryism would provide all the religious means which would be required by the whole nation.

We propose, then, to continue our examination of Dissenting Statistics in England and Wales, not merely with the view of showing that the voluntary system has not, and does not, supply the means of public worship to *one-fortieth* portion of the whole population, but also with the intention of demonstrating, that, but for the existence of a National and State religion in this country, the people would be without the means of grace, and consequently without a warranted hope of glory.

BEDFORDSHIRE.

This county has a population of 108,000 souls. It has 134 parishes and townships ; it covers 463 square miles ; has 21,235 inhabited houses, and twelve Congregational meeting-houses. The oldest meeting-house in the county bears date 1650. From that time not

one was erected for fifty years. Then two more were built seventy-seven years afterwards. Twelve years subsequently another was opened, and then from 1789 to 1806 no meeting-house was built in that county : one in 1812, one in 1822, another in 1829, another in 1838, and finally a little conventicle made its appearance at Ledburn in 1840. *There is no association of Independent ministers in the county.* The twelve meeting-houses may be estimated as being capable of containing 4,000 persons, out of a population of 108,000 ; deficit, 104,000. Not indeed that four thousand persons attend at these twelve places of Dissenting worship ; but, at any rate, not more than four thousand could attend, for some of the meeting-houses in Bedfordshire are very small.

BERKSHIRE.

This county has a population of 160,000 souls. It has 189 parishes and townships ; it covers 752 square miles ; has 31,472 inhabited houses, and twenty-six Congregational meeting-houses. The date of the oldest meeting-house is 1670, and only four have been erected since 1800. If four hundred attendants be allowed to each of the twenty-six meeting-houses, they would provide accommodation

for 10,400 out of 160,000 souls ; deficiency, 149,600. The Berkshire Association of Independent Ministers was so small and weak, that, to keep it together during a long period of time, it was obliged to embrace within its arms the Dissenting places of worship of parts of Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, and Middlesex. Even the East Berkshire Association, to this day, has, out of fifteen places connected with it, eleven within the borders of Bucks, Middlesex, and Oxfordshire. This looks far from prosperous for Dissent in Berkshire, the head-quarters of which are at Reading and Thatcham.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.

This county has a population of 156,000 souls. It has 223 parishes and townships ; covers 738 square miles ; has 31,071 inhabited houses, and twenty-nine Congregational meeting-houses. Dissent dates as far back as 1660, but how little progress has it made in Bucks in one hundred and eighty-two years ! Only twenty-eight meeting-houses have been erected during that period, of which eight or nine belong to the nineteenth century. We know some of the meeting-houses to be *so small*, that really it is impossible to average them at more than 350 each, and then our

average will be much above the mark. So that the Congregational meeting-houses in Bucks afford means of public worship to only 10,000, out of a population of 156,000 ;—deficit, 146,000. The great men amongst their Dissenting brethren in the county are the Messrs. Bull, of Newport Pagnel. Some of the meeting-houses are without ministers, whilst those supplied with preachers have been educated principally at Hoxton, Hackney, and Newport Pagnel. In this county, however, Dissent of late years has made some efforts. The North Bucks Association has established six new “causes” and twenty-one village chapels, where there are no stated teachers, but where preaching is conducted on the principle of itinerancy. Some of the Dissenters in this county belong to the respectable class of farmers, and thus it was that 2,100*l.* were raised to encourage and propagate Voluntaryism, by means of domiciliary visitation, and the increase of small chapels.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE.

This county has a population of 164,500 souls. It has 175 parishes and townships ; covers 857 square miles ; has 33,112 inhabited houses, and 28 Congregational meeting-houses. Dissent can boast of a place of worship at

Barrington as far back as 1689, but no pastor now presides there ; and Voluntaryism is indeed at a discount. Mr. Thodey, the brother of the glover in the Poultry, London, is the top man in the county ; but, with the exception of himself, there are no Dissenting *stars* to be found in Cambridgeshire ; and out of twenty-nine “ causes ” there are nine vacant—that is, without ministers. The Homerton and Highbury students supply these vacant pulpits, and Congregationalism cannot be fanned into a flame, notwithstanding all their eloquence. Oh, the wretchedness and misery of some of the Dissenting ministers in this part of England ! Their flocks scattered and lukewarm ; their officers quarrelling and divided ; their own families only half provided for by the niggardly supporters of a fallen cause. Poor Joseph Stockbridge languishes at Guilden Morden, whilst the new meeting at Royston is open to the best bidder. There is a sort of “ Desperate Effort Society,” called “ The South Cambridgeshire Union and Home Missionary Society,” founded in 1833, “ for promoting Christian knowledge ” in the county ; but, in order to set it and keep it a-going, the Baptists and Independents were compelled to unite ! The result has been just what might have been

expected. The total receipts of last year from all the Congregational and all the Baptist meetings for this Dissenting "Christian Knowledge Society" were only 143*l.* 12*s.* 9*d.* or about 3*l.* 10*s.* per meeting. Hasten then, hasten, Dissenters of Cambridgeshire, to redeem your characters, and pay to Mr. Brimley, of Cambridge, or to Mr. Madgin, of Duxford, your much desired and greatly needed contributions! Remember that "the churches," *i. e.*, the meeting-houses, in the north-eastern part of the county, are at present without an association; and remember too that the editor of the *Congregational* has added, "*It is to be hoped they will not long remain so.*" On the contrary, we say, that it is to be hoped they *will*; for really it is nothing short of solemn and deliberate mockery for the Dissenters of Cambridgeshire, with their 143*l.* per annum, to profess to promote Christian knowledge amongst a population of 164,000 souls, scattered over an area of 857 square miles.

CHESHIRE.

This county has a population of 395,300; has 487 parishes, townships, &c.; covers 1,052 square miles; has 73,390 inhabited houses; and has 37 Congregational meeting-houses. Of these 37, there are two at

Macclesfield and three at Stockport. Some of the meeting-houses in this county are very small, but we will still adhere to the average of 400 per meeting-house, and we find that only 14,800 can be accommodated, out of a population of 395,300 ;—deficiency, upwards of 380,000 souls. In fact, the real deficiency is much greater, for, instead of 14,800 persons attending these 37 meeting-houses, not more than 10,000 at the utmost are ever present in them. “The Cheshire Union,” in support of itinerant preaching, raises about 200*l.* per annum, or 6*l.* per meeting-house. It employs four agents to teach and preach over 1,052 square miles, and to 395,300 souls!! Dissenterism dates as far back as 1670 in Cheshire, at a place called Tintwistle ; but, though 170 years have since passed away, there are only 10,000 Congregationalists out of 395,300 souls. There are some vacancies of pastors in the Congregational places of worship, and three or four places, being unable to support their ministers, are connected with other “causes.” Dissent is far from prosperous in Cheshire.

CORNWALL.

This county has a population of 341,269 ; has 216 parishes, townships, &c. ; covers

1,330 square miles ; has 65,641 inhabited houses ; and has 41 Congregational meeting-houses. Many of these meeting-houses are without pastors. Most of those who are pastors are uneducated men ; and although the “Cornwall County Association” has existed forty years, it has only got up a dozen little wooden or red-brick houses of worship during that period. Dissent dates from 1700 in Cornwall, both at Falmouth and Penzance ; at the former of which places the veteran Timothy Wildbore, from the college of Lady Huntingdon at Cheshunt, preaches to Independents the doctrines of her ladyship ; and at the second of which places one J. Foxall, from Hoxton, draws congregations of 200 to 300. There is a Doctor Cope at Penhryn, who also belonged to Hoxton academy, when that institution belonged to the Dissenters. The 41 Congregational meeting-houses we will again reckon as containing an average of 400, or a grand total of 16,400 to meet the spiritual wants of a population of 341,269—deficiency, 324,869. Yet Sir Culling Smith proclaims the perfect adequacy of the voluntary principle to supply the means of grace to the whole population. Then why do you not set to work directly, Sir Culling ? Take this county of Cornwall under your special protection, and instead of ad-

dress your voluntary brethren on the subject of your *principle*, get to facts and to acts—get to works and to deeds, instead of mere orations and denunciations. Let us see the voluntary principle carried out into bricks and mortar, at any rate, and then we shall understand its feasibility.

CUMBERLAND.

Cumberland has a population of 177,912 souls; has 203 parishes, townships, &c.; covers 1,523 square miles; has 34,444 inhabited houses; and has 21 Congregational meeting-houses. Of these 21 there are nine without ministers, and not one man of any importance is to be found amongst the pastors. Dissent dates as far back, at Parkhead, as 1711, and we believe some other meeting-houses were erected prior to that time. At any rate, during the period of 130 years, only twenty meeting-houses have been built; and now, in 1842, only 8,400 persons can be accommodated in them all, out of a population of 177,912;—nearly 170,000 deficiency. And here again we must observe that 6,000 would be much nearer the mark than 8,400 of the Dissenters who really attend. There is a general remark also with reference to the persons attending Dissenting places of worship,

which peculiarly applies to Cumberland, and it is this, that a great many of the lower classes attend the meeting-houses, not because they are Dissenters, and not because they are not attached to the Church of England, but because meeting-houses are near to their doors, whilst the parish church is often far removed. In other cases they go to the meeting-house because the Dissenting minister, or deacons, or ladies of his congregation, have got the parents to consent to the children attending at the Dissenting Sunday or Infant Schools. The parents are expected, if not absolutely required, to attend at the meeting, as a sort of compliment paid to the Dissenting minister in return for the instruction given at the Dissenting schools. This cannot be said to apply to the frequenters of the parish church. Those who attend at church are Church people. No Dissenters go there. But we say many thousands go to meeting for the reasons we have above stated. The "Cumberland Association" of Independent pastors was formed in 1831; but during the ten years of its existence it has been anything but successful.

DERBYSHIRE.

This county has a population of 272,200; has 310 parishes, townships, &c.; covers

an area of 1,028 square miles ; has 52,900 inhabited houses ; and has 44 Congregational meeting-houses. At first sight it would seem that this was a large number, but by far the majority of the meeting-houses are small, and Dissent is in a by no means rising condition in this county. The man of most note and spirit is James Gawthorne, the minister at Brookside, Derby, who, although a very zealous Dissenter, does not lend himself to low tricks or shuffling, and who has on more than one occasion reprimanded those who did. There are seven of these forty-four meeting-houses without pastors ; five are supplied by students ; and three are held with others, for the best of all reasons, viz., that alone they do not pay.

Most of the meeting-houses are small. There are doubtless some exceptions, such as Belper and Derby, but these are not many. Still, however, we will average the seat room at 400 each chapel ; and thus 17,400 persons, out of 272,200, may be accommodated ;—deficiency, 254,800. “The Derbyshire Congregational Union” was formed in 1825, and joined the general union in 1834. Mr. Gawthorne “keeps matters together” tolerably well ; and the county is divided into four districts, and the districts meet regularly. Still nearly 200 years have elapsed

since Dissent installed itself at Chinley ; and at the end of 200 years, out of 272,200 souls, Congregationalism only provides for 17,400. Yet this is the system to which it is proposed by Sir Culling Smith to entrust the souls of our whole population. It will not do, Sir Culling !

DEVONSHIRE.

This county covers an area of 2,585 square miles ; has 471 parishes, townships, &c. ; contains a population of 534,000, with 94,637 inhabited houses, and 88 Congregational meeting-houses. Thus, in one out of five parishes and townships, there is a meeting-house. This would, at first, appear to be a larger proportion than in other counties, but it must be borne in mind, that at Devonport there are three meeting-houses, at Exeter four, at Exmouth two, and at Plymouth three. Still Dissent is, on the whole, more flourishing in Devonshire than in some other counties we have already noticed. On the other hand, there are twelve out of the 88 without pastors ; and a great many more, unable to maintain a regular pastor, are furnished by the Exeter academy with supplies of students, who preach very nearly gratuitously. This institution was formerly at Axminster, and is styled " The Westminster Academy." Dissent dates at

Axminster as far back as 1662, and at Tiverton, Honiton, and Bideford, Congregational Dissenters, or rather Independents, existed about the same period. In the eighteenth century, the progress of Dissent in this county was by no means rapid, and during the last forty-one years twenty meeting-houses have been erected therein. The "causes" of the eighteenth century are those which are the most flagging, and the Hoxton pastors are as unsuccessful as those who were brought up at Newport Pagnel. There are three district associations in the county. "The South Devon Association," of which Mr. Gibson, of Plymouth, is the treasurer, and Mr. C. Smith, the Dissenting minister at Plymouth, and Mr. Tarbotton, the Dissenting minister at Totness, are the secretaries. Then there is "The East Devon Association," of which a Mr. Evans is the treasurer, and Mr. W. Wright, of Honiton, the Dissenting minister, is the secretary. And, finally, there is "The North Devon Association," of which Mr. B. Kent, of Barnstaple, the Dissenting minister, is the secretary. Although there are several large meeting-houses in this county, there are a great many more small ones, and we might with propriety estimate the average number of persons attending at those

places of worship at 300. We prefer, however, to err on the right side, *i.e.*, on the side of liberality, and we take the average of 350. If we multiply that number by 88, the number of meeting-houses, we shall find that Dissent, after all, only provides in this county for 30,800 souls, out of a total population of 534,000. Total unprovided for by Dissent, 503,200 souls! Yet Devonshire is one of the crack counties of Congregationalism! Destroy, then, the churches in this county, as the *Patriot* and the *Nonconformist* desire, and what would be the result? Why that not one-fifteenth of the population would have any places of worship provided for them.

DORSETSHIRE.

This county covers an area of 1,006 square miles; has 284 parishes, townships, &c.; contains a population of 174,743 souls; has 34,559 inhabited houses and 35 Dissenting meeting-houses. Dissent dates as far back as 1640, since, at Blandford, the Independents or Presbyterians were then to be found there. And this leads us to an observation that we ought sooner to have made in these Letters on Dissenting Statistics, *viz.*, that in a very large proportion of the cases of Dissenting places of worship, the trusts of the

old deeds are most shamefully violated. An immense number were founded by Presbyterians, for *Presbyterian* worship. These have frequently degenerated to Arian and Socinian heresies. Others, founded by Independents, have become Baptists, and *vice versa*. These illegal changes of trusts have often given rise to law and Chancery suits; and if the Houses of Parliament were to direct returns to be made of the numbers of meeting-houses, and their denominations, through the kingdom, with copies of the original trust-deeds under which those places of worship were founded, it would indubitably affirm that four-fifths of the old trust-deeds of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are illegally and openly violated at the present time.

It would seem that in Dorsetshire not more than six places of Dissenting worship have been erected since the commencement of the present century. Mr. Thomas Durant, of Poole, the Dissenting minister, is one of the most liberal and enlightened men amongst the Congregationalists in the county: he possesses great and deserved influence among the denomination to which he belongs. We have been struck with the curious names of some of the Dissenting pastors in this county: "Besenti," "Le Conteur," "Guenett," "Spink," and "Erle-

back,"are some specimens of what we mean. Where in the world did they get these names? Mr. Spink was brought up at Hoxton; but we cannot discover from what academies or seminaries the others have emanated. The "Dorset Association" was formed at Wareham, on September 9, 1795; and in 1797, says their historian, "they *began* to take active measures to disseminate religious knowledge in the county." What they *began* to do we cannot tell, but that they have most signally failed is certain, since, though Dissent dates at Blandford as far back as 1640, being upwards of two centuries ago, only 35 meeting-houses have been built in that period. The meeting-houses in this county are, on the whole, rather larger than those in Devonshire, and there are fewer vacancies than in the "causes" in Devonshire; we shall therefore estimate the average accommodation at 400 to each place of worship, though we know that such a calculation is somewhat exaggerated. The thirty-five meeting-houses will thus supply room for 14,000, out of a population of 174,743;—deficiency, 160,743. With such Statistics as these, which are all based on the printed official admissions of the Congregationalists themselves, how very absurd it is on the part of Dissenters to advocate the *efficiency* of the voluntary system.

Let them debate the abstract principle if they will : but at least let them admit that in practice it would be a most miserable failure.

DURHAM.

In the first Letter we referred to the county of Durham as one peculiarly unfavourable to Nonconformity. It comprises an area of 1,097 square miles ; contains 280 parishes, townships, &c. ; has a population of 324,277 souls, and 57,450 inhabited houses. Yet, with such an extent of territory, so vast a population, and so many inhabited dwellings, only nineteen Congregational meeting-houses exist in the whole county. Of these nineteen, *two* are in the *city* of Durham ; so that only eighteen distinct places in the county have Dissenting chapels. Dissent only dates from the eighteenth century in Durham, since the oldest meeting-house was erected at Sunderland in 1719. From that period to 1778 no new "cause" was started, and out of the nineteen meeting-houses existing there are five without pastors. Rotherham and High-bury academies have supplied six of the present Dissenting ministers ; the rest, with one or two exceptions, have gone from the plough or counter to the pulpit and the vestry-room. In default of a better arrangement, the Dis-

senters of Northumberland and Durham clubbed together in 1822 to institute "The Durham and Northumberland Association," which was united to the head Congregational Union in London in 1831; but their success has been small indeed, and Mr. Charlton, of Newcastle, the treasurer, and Mr. Reid, the Newcastle Dissenting minister, the secretary, alike grieve over an empty treasury and a failing cause. During the last twenty years, only three new meeting-houses have been erected in the length and breadth of the county. The nineteen meeting-houses in Durham are of various dimensions; but an average of 400 persons is much more than attend there. They will contain, then, 7,600 persons, and no more; whilst the county has a population of 324,277;—deficiency, 316,677.

ESSEX.

Essex is the hot-bed of Dissent. If a church-rate has to be opposed, Essex furnishes its martyrs. If a clergyman has to be opposed, Essex is always ready to send up its hero. If some outrageous scandal has to be perpetrated in a church—some brawl, some desecrating scene of impiety—Essex is selected as the scene. If Episcopacy is to be bearded, and the Ecclesiastical Courts

are to be defied, the Essex Dissenters are first and foremost in the ranks of schism. This county contains an area of 1,533 square miles; 412 parishes, townships, &c.; has a population of 345,000, inhabiting 67,602 houses; and the enormous number of seventy-seven Congregational meeting-houses. Of the Dissenting ministers labouring there, eleven were educated at Homerton, eleven at Hoxton, six at Highbury, three at Hackney, three at Wymondley, and two at Newport Pagnel. The Homerton, Hoxton, Highbury, and Hackney lads are all instructed to "hate the Church of England." When we include *Hoxton* in the number, we do not mean the Wesleyan students who were educated there after the Congregationalists had let them the academy, but we simply refer to the students brought up at Hoxton when the building belonged to Mr. Thomas Wilson, who is now lord paramount at Highbury. And in referring to the fact, that at least thirty-one of the present Dissenting ministers in Essex were brought up at Homerton, Hoxton, Highbury, and Hackney, we had an object in view, which was to state, that in any county where the Dissenting ministers have generally been educated at these seminaries, there always exists a more than usual amount of

bitterness and ill feeling towards the Church of England. Dissent dates in Essex, at Hatfield Heath and at Terling, as far back as 1662. There are eleven meeting-houses belonging to the seventeenth century ; twenty-four to the eighteenth century ; twenty-one to the nineteenth century ; and the dates of the remaining twenty-one are uncertain. The names of "Morrell," "Carter," "Craig," "Berry," "Burls," "Redford," and "Pinchback," are some of the best known amongst the Essex Dissenters as their pastors ; and it is singular, that out of seventy-seven "causes" there are only ten without ministers. Of the seventy-seven meeting-houses in this county there are two at Barking, two at Chelmsford, two at Chigwell, two at Colchester, two at Halstead, and two at Stansted-Mount-Fitchet. There exist in this county two societies among the Independents ; one, founded in 1768, only for ministers, established "for fraternal conference and public worship ;" and the other "a Home Missionary Society" for the county, under the title of "The Essex Congregational Union." The historian of the Essex Dissenters informs us that "a number of ministers and other gentlemen, deputed from several Congregational Churches in the county, met at Dunmow, on the 5th of June,

1798, to consider what steps might be taken 'for the further spreading of the Gospel in these parts.' " This led to the formation of that society, which held its first general meeting on the 23rd of April, 1799. Notwithstanding, however, all this stir, the association in question, at the distance of forty-four years, only *partially* supports three agents and four ministers. The *Congregational Magazine* quaintly observes, when speaking of this society, that "it is much to the credit of the pastors of the churches (read *meeting-houses*) and their friends, that a large amount of evangelical effort is made by them that never comes within the report of the County Union." This is almost unbelievable, since it forms no part of *Dissenting Statistics* not to let the left hand know what the right hand doeth. We should rather think that "the report of the County Union" is silent as to this "large amount of evangelical *effort*" because there is nothing very satisfactory to record. The fact is, that, with all the boasted union of the Essex Dissenters, there exists a good deal of disunion, and it is therefore that the *Congregational* exclaims, "It seems greatly to be desired that all the efforts of the Essex churches were embodied in one document." But well it knows that this cannot be the case. The income of this wonderful society

is 497*l.* 9*s.* 3*d.*, which, when divided by the number of meeting-houses in the county, viz., 77, will give only the sum of 6*l.* 10*s.* as the contribution on an average from each "cause." Now, considering that Essex is the hot-bed of Dissent, this, to our apprehension, is by no means an astonishing sum. The meeting-houses in Essex are of various dimensions. Some are unusually large, others are exceedingly small. In some places Dissent is rampant—in others it is nearly expiring. The fair average is between 300 and 350, perhaps 325, but that we may not be accused of unfairness we will take the average at 350. If this number be multiplied by 77 we shall have a total of seat-room afforded by Dissenting places of worship to 26,950, out of 345,000;—deficiency, 318,050. Yet, notwithstanding this deficiency of the voluntary principle in Essex to meet the spiritual wants of the population, if Mr. Craig and Mr. Carter could be believed, the Church of England is a great nuisance, and THE BRAINTREE CASE is celebrated in the annals of the persecution of the Church of England by wild and desperate Dissenters.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE.

There is a vast difference between Dissent in Essex and Dissent in Gloucestershire. In the former it is low, vulgar, cunning; in the

latter it is less prosperous, but much more quiet and conscientious. Gloucestershire contains an area of 1,258 square miles, with 382 parishes, townships, &c. It has a population of 431,307, and 80,856 inhabited houses ; its Congregational meeting-houses are 57 in number. Thus, whilst Essex, with a population of only 345,000, has 77 meeting-houses, Gloucestershire has, with 431,307 souls, only 57 Dissenting places of worship. In Gloucestershire there are five former students of Hoxton and three of Highbury now dignified by the name of "pastors ;" and it is worth recording, that when other teachers of Dissent have *not* been educated, generally speaking, to hate the Church, their conduct is less objectionable. Out of the 57 Dissenting meeting-houses in this county, ten are situate at Bristol, two at Cheltenham, two at Dursley, and two at Stroud. Messrs. Jack and Thomas at Bristol, Mr. Hyatt at Gloucester, and Mr. Burder at Stroud, are some of the most influential ministers of this county. There are ten meeting-houses, out of the 57, without ministers. Dissent at Castle-green, Bristol, dates as far back as 1670, but only twelve "new causes" have been founded during the last fifty years. "The Gloucestershire Association" was first formed at the close of the last century ; but it

has lately been remodelled, and rejoices in the name of "The Bristol and Gloucestershire Congregational Union, in connection with the Congregational Union of England and Wales." We confess we think this rather a long title for the quarterly toast at the quarterly dinners of the brethren, when "success to the voluntary principle" would sound much better; but Mr. Jack and Mr. Hyatt, the treasurer and secretary, must of course know better than we can. The meeting-houses at Bristol have been classed as belonging to the Congregational Dissenters, when such is not the case with the whole of them. Take, for example, "the Tabernacle." We perceive that Whitfieldites, or Calvinistic Methodists, and Lady Huntingdonites, or followers of her ladyship, are gradually violating the original trusts of the chapels founded by George Whitfield and by her ladyship, and are enlisting under the banners of the Moorgate Union. This ought not to be. Mr. Whitfield and Lady Huntingdon had views of a very different character, with reference to the Church of England, from those held by the conductors of the *Patriot* and the *Nonconformist*, and were, indeed, *irregular* members of the Church of England. But can this be said of "*the Congregational Board?*" By no means. It

is time that the system of overthrowing all the trusts and intentions of the founders of charities and institutions, whether Dissenting or Methodist, should be put a stop to ; and Dissenters who respect themselves should not lend themselves to such frauds on the wills of testators. The Dissenting meeting-houses in Gloucestershire are generally large, and, although some are very small, we will take the average at 400. If this number be multiplied by 57, we shall have a grand total of seats and standing-room for 22,800 persons. Yet the population of the county is 431,307. Consequently there is a deficiency of 408,507. And it must not be forgotten that, when we estimate each Dissenting meeting-house as containing 400 or 350 persons in this or in any other county, not more than 30 or 40 of these 400 sittings are *free* sittings. Amongst Dissenters, even poor servant girls, with their country wages of 4*l.*, 5*l.*, and 6*l.* per annum, are expected to pay for a *seat* in the gallery, costing them six shillings per annum ; to contribute to the quarterly collections, for “defraying the expenses incidental to carrying on the worship of God,” &c.; to subscribe to the Missionary Society one penny per week ; and thus, with ragged shoes and stockings, wretched bonnets, and torn gowns,

to part with from 20 to 25 per cent. of their hardly earned stipend. In Dissenting places of worship, "the gentry" are those who pay; and those who do not, must stand, not sit, in the aisles.

HAMPSHIRE.

Hampshire is one of those counties where Dissent has in a most especial manner addressed itself to the working classes, and where it has met with some corresponding success. Not indeed that there are many *flourishing* "causes" in the county, but its length and breadth have been fully explored, and a variety of meeting-houses have been opened to comparatively small populations. Yet still, what is the result? Why, although "the Hampshire Association" is divided into five districts, to each of which there is a local secretary, the total income of the association for the whole county does not exceed 150*l*.!! To propagate Congregationalism over this large and populous county the sum of 150*l*. is annually raised by ninety-two congregations, or about 30*s*. per congregation! This is an important fact. It shows how *poor* is Dissenterism, except in some of the great manufacturing towns, and how utterly is it unable, physically unable, to meet the spiritual wants of the population.

The county of Hants, now generally called Southampton, covers an area of 1625 square miles ; contains 334 parishes, townships, &c. ; has 66,589 inhabited houses ; a population of 354,940 souls ; and ninety-two Dissenting places of worship.

The number of ninety-two Dissenting meeting-houses in Hampshire will at first appear startling, but when they are examined in detail that surprise will be removed. The Isle of Wight has a deputy meeting-house at Brading, another at East Cowes, a third at West Cowes, two at Newport, one at Ryde, one at Shanklin, and one at Ventnor. How *can* they answer? is the first enquiry ; and the reply to it is, *not at all*. Mr. Guyer at Ryde, and Mr. Giles at Newport, may each get a tolerably good income from visitors and residents ; but the rest, with even the aid of boarders and lodgers in fine weather (or during the season), and even with young pupils too, can scarcely "make both ends meet." Abbott's Ann and Borhunt, Catherine Hill and Cosham, Cripplestile and Crookham Common, East Woodhay and Elson, Greenlane and Hawkley, Itchen's Well and Lamb's Lees, Mark's-corner and Parley, Pilley and Shortbreath, Sopley and Waterditch, have all what are called "meeting-houses ;" but oh !

the miserable, wan, wasted-away congregations at these little, out of the way, shabby places ! It is a fact which cannot be disputed, that, although in Hampshire the Congregationalists have *nominally* ninety-two places of worship, thirty-two are without pastors, and for the best of all possible reasons, viz., they cannot pay them.

One of the most inveterate, and at the same time least informed enemy of the Church, is Mr. William Thorn, the Dissenting minister at Winchester, where the building used for public worship was erected as long back as 1662. The oldest meeting-house in the county is that at Andover, which was built in 1640, and where a former student at Highbury now officiates as pastor. One of the Slatteries, whose name is another word for schism, is the pastor at Finch Dean ; and another of the same name at Rowland's Castle ; and two of the "Scamps," both named William, preach at Havant and at Hayling Island. The grand Dissenting orator and oracle of the county, however, is the well-known Mr. Adkins, of Southampton. He presides at "Bible and Missionary meetings ;" takes the chair at association dinners ; debates, over old port and pale sherry, the merits of the voluntary system ; and is re-

ported to be most astounding and efficient in his charity sermons. He has a competitor in the person of Mr. Flower ; but Mr. Adkins is paramount among all Dissenting classes.

The Dissenting meeting-houses in Hampshire are generally small, and thinly attended. If we allowed 200 as an average congregation we should far exceed the real attendance. But, that Messrs. Adkins, Ginger, Slatterie, and Co., may not find fault with us, we will estimate the attendance at 250, even at "Shortbreath," "Cripplestile," and "Waterditch." Thus, at the ninety-two meeting-houses, we shall have accommodation for, and attendance of, 23,000. But then the population of the county is 354,940 ;—deficiency, 331,940. It may be thought by some that we have understated the average meeting-room and attendance at Dissenting places of worship in Hampshire, when we estimate the average at 250. If, after our assurance, again repeated, that we have far exceeded the average attendance when we have calculated at the rate of 250, any person should desire 300 to be estimated as the average, be it so, and what will be the result? Simply this, that for a population of 354,940, the Dissenters supply meeting room for 27,600 ;—deficiency, 327,340. Yet this county of South-

ampton is the great preserver of midland Dissent. Whether then it be London, Middlesex, Essex, or Hampshire—the favourite dwelling-places of schism—still the result is the same—most strikingly against Nonconformity.

HEREFORDSHIRE.

Dissent has a terrible tale to tell in this county. Nowhere does it admit itself to be so defeated and broken down as in Hereford. Hear the *Congregational*!

“In no county in the kingdom is the need of a central institution like the *Home Missionary Society*, as now constituted, more clearly seen, to assist the weak churches, and to restore the waste places of our denomination. The County Association has become extinct, and some chapels are actually shut up, whilst towns and villages, that greatly need the Gospel, do not hear it proclaimed. The return of the Rev. C. U. Davies to the county town is connected with a plan of intended operation, which, it is hoped, will produce a more healthy state of things.”

Mark this! Voluntaryism unable to support itself in the county, and obliged to appeal to the Central Home Missionary Society in London to aid it! The Dissenting “churches” are “weak!” These are “the waste places of *our* denomination!” The County Association is extinct! Some *chapels* shut up!

And towns and villages without the Gospel ! We need not, we presume, apprise our readers that "being without the Gospel," in Dissenting phraseology, does not mean without a church, without authorized clergy, without public worship, without the reading of the Scripture, without the sacraments of Christianity. Oh no ! But being "without the Gospel," means nothing more than this, "without a conventicle !"

Herefordshire covers an area of 863 square miles ; has 255 parishes, townships, &c. ; possesses a population of 114,438 souls, 23,461 inhabited houses, and thirteen Dissenting meeting-houses, of which two are shut up, one without a pastor, and three are only occasionally supplied. The persons who preach in the meeting-houses still open have, with but two exceptions, been taken from little better than the plough-tail. And yet Dissent dates its origin, at Hereford and at Ross, to the year 1662. In 180 years but eleven places of Dissenting worship have been built, and in these congregations of 150 are accustomed to assemble. At Long Town the Dissenters now and then see a student. At Ruxton there is no one to preach. And at Weobley the meeting-house is deserted. If the average attendance at ten of the meeting-

houses in this county be estimated at 200, there will be found to be Dissenting accommodation for 2,000 out of 114,438 ;—deficiency, 112,438.

HERTFORDSHIRE.

Sir Culling Eardley Smith, *Baronet*, of Bedwell Park, is the hero of Hertfordshire Dissent. The Independents, since the days of their great founder, Brown, have been very unused to the society of gentlemen. We are aware that men are not Christians because they are gentlemen, but we are also not ignorant of the fact, that men are not Christians in the precise ratio in which they are *not* gentlemen. When Dissenters get hold of a baronet or a barrister, an M.P. or a man of classical education and acquirements, they really deify him with their adulations, and make the poor man blush for a fame he did not know he merited. Sir Culling Eardley Smith was once a Churchman. But he was fond of popularity. As a Churchman, he must have consented to swim down the stream of life with the rest of his fellow-countrymen unnoticed and unknown ; but as a Dissenter, and above all an agitating Dissenter, he could hope at least for that fame, which, if it did not survive him, would gratify his love of display for the month or the year. So he

became a Dissenter. At Bedwell Park a meeting-house has been erected, and one Brown (doubtless some relative to the Barrister Brown, of "the Protestant Society") is the officiating teacher. He himself was instructed at *Highbury*, and to small assemblies he now preaches, under the superintendence of the proprietor of Bedwell Park. Sir Culling cannot preside at the humblest meeting of his new associates without having his ears dinned with the complimentary phrases of "Sir Culling" this, and "Sir Culling" that, "the noble baronet," the "right honourable chairman," and a thousand other equally misplaced compliments. He is the *ne plus ultra* of Dissenting aristocracy, unless indeed Sir John Easthope, *Baronet*, is in future to dispute with him for the ascendancy.

The county of Hertford covers an area of 630 square miles ; has 141 parishes, townships, &c. ; contains a population of 157,237 souls ; has 30,155 inhabited houses, and 36 Congregational meeting-houses. Dissent dates at Hertford as far back as 1673, but, considering the efforts which have been made to develope the voluntary system, it is astonishing how little success "The Hertfordshire Union" has met with. This Hertfordshire Union was instituted at St. Alban's on

April 19th, 1810, "for the diffusion of religious knowledge through the towns and villages of the county." This is a specimen of the language of Dissent. When it has not planted its standard in any place or county, "religious knowledge" is not diffused! Sir Culling Eardley Smith, Baronet, is the president; Mr. W. Langford, of Wymondley, is the treasurer; and Messrs. Upton, of St. Alban's, Anthony, of Hertford, and Wayne, of Hitchin, are the secretaries. This is a union of Baptists and Independents: but there is no distinct Congregational union in the county. Dr. Harris, the author of "Mammon," is the most eminent man in the county, but it is as preacher at Lady Huntingdon's college chapel that he officiates. And who will say that her ladyship was a Dissenter? Out of thirty-six Congregational meeting-houses, nine or ten are without pastors, and a large proportion of the remaining twenty-six ministers have not received any regular education. Of the thirty-six meeting-houses, three are situate at Cheshunt, two at Hadham, and two at Ware. Just think of two Independent meeting-houses at Ware! What contending "causes!" What bickering! What heartburning! The pastors starve, and the congregations are half fed. Yet this is Hertfordshire Dissent! As

some of the meeting-houses in this county are large, though many are small, we will take the average (to please Sir Culling) at 300; and the attendance on the whole thirty-six buildings at 10,800—deficiency, with reference to the population, 147,000 souls. Come, Sir Culling, stick to your own county, and provide meeting-house room for a greater number than this.

HUNTINGDONSHIRE.

Once upon a time, *i.e.* in 1630, a Dissenting meeting-house was founded at St. Ives. Two hundred and eleven years have passed away since that period, and yet there are only ten Congregational places of worship in the whole county! There is an association of Baptist and Independent ministers, which supports one itinerant; but his labours are rather wanted at the established “causes,” for though there are ten Dissenting chapels, there are only four pastors.

Huntingdonshire covers an area of 372 square miles, has 106 parishes, townships, &c., a population of 58,700, and 11,897 inhabited houses. Dissent is at a very low ebb indeed in Huntingdonshire, and so it is likely to remain, for Dissenters are fast joining the Church, and will not provide the necessary funds for the development of the voluntary principle.

LETTER IV.

A CORRESPONDENT of the *Gazette*, styling himself "A Cornish Clergyman," has complained of our "Cornish Statistics of Dissent." If this gentleman had, however, before he wrote down his complaints, taken the trouble to have read the *first* or introductory paper to this series of Letters, he would have found that his grievances are only imaginary. In that paper it is distinctly stated that the *Congregational Magazine* had, in its numbers for December and January last, published some valuable statistical accounts of the *Congregational* or *Independent* body, and that as those accounts were nothing less than official, we had not hesitated to regard them as statistics which Dissenters themselves would not fail to admit. When then the "Cornish Clergyman" is so indignant that the Baptists, Quakers, and Methodists are not referred to by us, we beg to state, first, that we did not, and do not, profess to give the statistics of those *Baptists* who have not joined the Congregational Union, because the *Congregational Magazine* has not given them, and we have adopted its *official*

statistics as the basis of our calculations. Secondly, that Quakers are not included in that, or in our account. Thirdly, that the Calvinistic Methodists are included by the *Congregational Magazine* in their statistics, and therefore we have included them in ours. And, fourthly, that the Wesleyans are, of course, not included in the Statistics of Dissent, since they are not Dissenters, in the common acceptation of that term, either in principles, doctrines, or discipline. We know very well that Wesleyan Methodism is strong in Cornwall; but Independents or Congregationalists are not so. If the clergy of our Church are true to themselves and their flocks, Dissent will continue to decrease everywhere, and even Wesleyan Methodists, though less removed from the Church than any other body of Christians, will approach nearer and nearer to the Episcopal Church of these realms, until eventually they will become merged in it. We now continue our Dissenting Statistics, commencing with

KENT.

This county covers an area of 1,557 square miles, contains 423 parishes, townships, &c.; possesses 95,547 inhabited houses, a population of 548,161 souls, and sixty-one Dissent-

ing meeting-houses. Considering that Deptford, Greenwich, and Woolwich are so near London, and that Dissent is always most active and prosperous in and near to condensed populations, it is really surprising that Kent should not contain more Congregational meeting-houses. The oldest meeting-house in Kent is at Staplehurst (where Mr. Grigsley is now the minister), having existed in 1662. The "causes" at Canterbury, Deal, Ramsgate, and Sandwich, likewise belong to the seventeenth century. The Dissenting academies at Hackney, Highbury, and the one formerly at Hoxton, have furnished by far the greater majority of the present Dissenting pastors in this county. There are eighteen out of the sixty-one meeting-houses without ministers. At Deptford there are two Dissenting places of worship; at Greenwich two; and at Woolwich three. At Ramsgate, where the Rev. George Townsend officiated for more than half a century, a new place of worship has been erected; and his successor, Mr. Bevis, is distinguished for his moderation and urbanity. At Woolwich, the brother of Mr. James, of Birmingham, one of the "towers of strength" of the Independent party, has a small respectable congregation. Mr. Chapman, of Greenwich, is a zealous Dissenter,

but is not offensive in his conduct, or bigoted in his attachments. The rest are men of very secondary importance. Mr. Powell, of Folkstone, preaches in the chapel of Lady Huntingdon, and amalgamates Independents and Whitfieldites. Mr. Viney, of Herne Bay, has a "red herring living," and a troublesome "church" of ladies. Mr. Jinkings, of Maidstone, is most intolerant. Mr. Knight, of Sandwich, preaches high Calvinism to empty benches, or to hearers fast asleep. He was formerly *equally successful* at Kingston-upon-Thames. At Tunbridge Wells a Mr. Slight has set up in opposition to the old Lady Huntingdon cause. The Kent Congregational Association was formed August 8, 1792. It is divided into five districts, and has a local secretary to each district. The treasurer is Mr. Brock, of Chatham; and the secretary Mr. Rooke, the Dissenting minister of Faversham. As some of the Dissenting places of worship in this county are large, we shall take the average of attendance at 350 in each meeting-house, which we are satisfied exceeds by fifty the real attendance at each place. Thus the sixty-one meeting-houses will supply accommodation for 21,350 persons out of 548,161. Deficiency, 526,811. Many of the "causes" in Kent are at an exceedingly low ebb, and

some of the pastors do not receive more than from 60%. to 100%. per annum. Little union exists in this county amongst the various Dissenting bodies, and the Baptists are most warm in their attacks on Independents. Mr. Daniel, the Baptist minister at Ramsgate, carries on an open warfare with the Independents, and makes baptism *by immersion* as very nearly essential to salvation.

LANCASHIRE.

Lancashire is so large and so populous a county, that everything belonging to it is necessarily on a great and splendid scale. Thus at Liverpool there are seventeen Dissenting places of worship, including those of the Welsh Methodists; at Manchester there are ten also, including a Welsh chapel. At Blackburn, Bolton, Chorley, Darwin, Hindley, Horwick, Preston, Warrington, Wigan, and Wymond Houses, there are two Dissenting meeting-houses in each town; whilst at Bury and Oldham there are four each, and at Salford three. The total number of Dissenting meeting-houses in Lancashire is 138. At first sight this appears to present an aspect of a most successful character, but we must go into the details of Lancashire Dissent, and we shall then find it less flourishing.

The county of Lancashire covers an area of 1,766 square miles ; it contains 449 parishes, townships, &c. ; it has 289,166 inhabited houses, and the enormous number of 23,604 uninhabited, besides 3,831 erecting ; and it contains a population of 1,667,064, being 90,000 souls more than in Middlesex, including the metropolis. Dissent undoubtedly existed in the seventeenth century in Lancashire, but only at Darwin and Oldham. During the eighteenth century only thirty meeting-houses were built ; whilst the nineteenth century, since the great increase of manufacturers and of a poor manufacturing population, has witnessed the erection of 106 Dissenting places of worship. Of these, ten have been built within the last five years.

“The Lancashire Congregational Union (says its historian) is among the oldest and most efficient county associations in the kingdom. It was first organized at Bolton, in June, 1786 ; but it took its present name and form at Manchester, in September, 1806. Since that period twenty-one churches (read *meeting-houses*) have been assisted, which are now contributing to its support, and aiding the general progress of religion in the world. It has at the present time about one hundred and fifty stations *and out-stations*, at which there are about 1,200 communicants, and not

less than 10,000 hearers. It enjoys the services of about 900 Sunday-school teachers, who instruct more than 6,000 scholars. The county is divided into four districts, Liverpool, Preston, Blackburn, and Manchester, to each of which are local officers. Richard Roberts, Esq., of Manchester, is the general treasurer, and the Rev. Dr. Raffles, of Liverpool, the secretary. Its income for 1839 was 1,522*l.* 17*s.* 2*d.* In accounting for the remarkable progress of Independency in Lancashire, the seminary first established by R. Spear, Esq., at Manchester, and afterwards continued at Blackburn, under Dr. Fletcher, Mr. Wardlaw, &c., should not be forgotten. ‘The Lancashire Independent College’ is now rising at Wittington, within three miles of Manchester, which will cost 25,000*l.*, nearly four-fifths of which sum have been already subscribed !”

Thus writes the *chronicler* of Dissent, who has been assisted by “A Brief History of the Rise and Progress of the *Lancashire Congregational Union*,” by Mr. Slate. Undoubtedly these sums look large when compared to those raised in other counties, but when 1,522*l.* 17*s.* 2*d.* are subscribed by 138 congregations, it is easy to see that on an average each congregation only subscribes 11*l.* 10*s.*

The wealth of some of the Dissenting manu-

facturers in Lancashire is also indubitable; and it is a fact that the strongholds of Wesleyan Methodism and of Romanism are also in this county. The Methodists at Manchester and its environs were the first to set the example of raising the enormous funds collected at the Centenary meetings. Nor are the funds of the Church of England in Lancashire a whit behind-hand in their noble and pious support of our national Protestant Episcopal Church. The efforts which have been made, and are still making in Liverpool and Manchester, are worthy of this noble county.

The county of Lancaster contains some of the most celebrated of the Dissenting ministers of the present day, though there are no less than forty-two meeting-houses without pastors, and twelve only supplied with beardless students. Thus, out of 138 Lancashire meeting-houses, only 84 have pastors. This is a decisive and unanswerable proof, notwithstanding the eulogies pronounced on the Lancashire Independents by their historian, that Independency, though very prosperous in the large towns and cities, is at a discount in the less populated and rural districts. Of the truth of this statement there cannot be a better proof than this—that at Black-

burn, Bolton, Bury, Chorley, Darwin, Liverpool, Manchester, Salford, Oldham, and Preston, out of 48 ministers and meeting-houses, there are but seven without pastors. Whilst at small places, such as Belham, Blakely, Belthorn, Golborne, Middleton, Patricroft, and Wharton, where the congregations can raise but small salaries for their ministers, they are all vacant. At Belmont, Droylsden, Four-lane Ends, Great Harwood, Heaton Mersy, Harporley, Huyton, Rams Grove, Todmorden, and Wymond Houses, the Dissenters do not even think of having fixed pastors, but are taught by itinerants, or by students. And these facts alone ought to open the eyes of Dissenters themselves to the truth, that the voluntary principle never would, and never could, supply the whole of this country with the means of Christian worship ; since, at the present moment, thousands of districts are wholly neglected by Dissent, and thousands of others are most imperfectly supplied.

Indeed, this seems to have been partly felt by the members of the Lancashire Dissenting Union, for the report of that society for 1840 concludes as follows :—

“ We have been niggard and scanty in the supply of those means which the great end we have proposed to ourselves, viz., the evangelization of the county ;

required, in order to its accomplishment: and the work has been impeded, and the efforts of the workmen, in various ways and instances, curtailed and crippled by our parsimony. We are challenged to show to the world that the *voluntary principle* in religion is, of itself, sufficiently powerful and expansive to furnish the means of the world's conversion. Let us do this first within the limits of our own county—for if we fail in this, what ground of hope is there for the world?"

The report of the same "*Union*" for 1841 thus opens:—

"It is always with mingled feelings that we proceed to the discharge of the duty which thus annually devolves upon us, of reporting the state of the several stations and itinerancies. There is so much over which to mourn, mingled with that which ought to awaken gratitude and joy, that we scarcely know whether to employ the language of congratulation or condolence—whether to erect the Ebenezer or utter the lamentation—whether 'to thank God and take courage,' or, with emotions *verging on despondency*, to say, 'who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?'"

A correspondent has transmitted to the Gazette some observations on Congregationalism in Lancashire, compiled from Slate's "*History of the Lancashire Congregational Union.*" The following table is not without interest:—

Districts.	Population, 1841.		Average Congregation.		Proportion per cent.		Members.		Sunday Scholars in Attendance.		Proportion per cent.		Teachers.		Number of Churches.				Meeting-houses.	
Liverpool...	93,810	1318	1 $\frac{1}{4}$	162	983	1	114	23	14	4	9	1	1	1	4	4	4	4	4	
Preston.....	63,100	2022	3 $\frac{1}{4}$	146	427	—	61	14	7	3	7	1	1	—	4	4	4	4	4	
Blackburn..	59,185	2088	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	304	1206	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	282	19	7	6	12	1	1	1	7	7	7	7	7	
Manchester.	128,365	4769	3 $\frac{3}{4}$	858	3513	2 $\frac{3}{4}$	569	47	26	7	21	1	1	2	20	20	20	20	20	
	344,460	10,197	3	1470	6129	1 $\frac{3}{4}$	1026	103	54	20	49	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
Expenditure of the Union, 1841.....1,769 <i>l.</i> 4 <i>s.</i> 9 <i>d.</i>																				
Balance due to the Treasurer.....183 <i>l.</i> 9 <i>s.</i> 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ <i>d.</i>																				

Of the 103 "churches," two are in Cheshire, three in Westmoreland, two in Yorkshire; leaving ninety-six to Lancashire. Of the forty-nine cases aided by the Union in 1840, there were fifteen cases of acknowledged *increase*, sixteen of *decrease*, and sixteen *despondency*;—in 1841 they may be classed as ten cases of *increase*, nine *decrease*, four despondency, and twenty-six stationary.

The only daily school noticed is "given up;" as is also one of the two infant schools. It may be well to state, that in these districts the Established Church has recently raised forty-five Sunday and daily schools, and thirty-five new churches. Dissent has also licensed thirteen meeting-houses for marriages, and the Establishment twenty-two churches and chapels.

We shall now proceed to our calculation with respect to the accommodation afforded by Dissenters to the whole of the population of Lancashire. There are several large meeting-houses well attended, like that of Dr. Raffles, at Liverpool. There are many others very respectably but not so numerously attended, like that of Dr. Halley, in Manchester. But there is a mass of others in the rural districts scarcely frequented, and where the Church and the Wesleyan Methodists

absorb that portion of the whole population who attend at any place of worship at all. We will admit, then, that 70 of the 138 meeting-houses are attended by congregations averaging 400, and 68 by congregations averaging 300 each. Thus, out of a population of one million, six hundred and sixty-seven thousand, and sixty-four souls, the Congregational Dissenters offer meeting-room to only 48,400, being a deficiency of 1,618,664 ! This is a fair and faithful account of Lancashire Dissent. So “the Church may still lift up her head, and go on *her* way rejoicing.”

LEICESTERSHIRE.

The county of Leicester covers an area of 306 square miles ; contains 308 parishes, townships, &c. ; has 44,649 inhabited houses ; a population of 215,855 ; and 27 Congregational meeting-houses. Of these, two are at Hinckley, and two at Leicester. That word, Leicester, calls to our remembrance a man of prodigious powers and unaffected piety, Robert Hall, whose works will live as long as the noble language in which they were composed. He belonged to the *Baptists*, but he had a profound contempt for the ignorant and pretending upstarts, who, as Baptist students, declared they were “called,” or considered themselves

so, to the ministry ! On one occasion Mr. Hall was interrupted in his studies by the visit of one of these striplings. "I have come, Mr. Hall, to consult you on a very important matter." "Indeed (replied Mr. Hall) ; pray what can it be?" "Why, sir, I consider it my duty to preach the Gospel. I think I have a call that way—don't you, Mr. Hall? It is not right, sir, is it, to hide one's talent in a napkin?" Mr. Hall, with his accustomed readiness and wit, replied, "Oh ! do not trouble yourself about that Mr. — ; a pocket handkerchief would be quite large enough."

Dissent had a footing in Leicestershire as far back as the close of the seventeenth century, at Market Harborough ; but since that period, a distance of 150 years, it has made little progress in this county.

The Leicestershire Association of Congregational Ministers and Meeting-houses joined the General Union in April, 1835. Mr. Nunnerley, of Leicester, is the treasurer, and Mr. Legge, the Dissenting minister, the secretary. The association has the aid of more than twenty gratuitous *occasional* teachers, who preach without being ordained, and are nothing better, with a few exceptions, than lay itinerants, The whole of the twenty-seven

congregations raise, however, but 200*l.* for their itinerant cause—about 7*l.* 10*s.* per congregation. There are little barns, or buildings, set apart for Dissenting worship at Burton Overy, Burbage, Countlessthorpe, Enderby, Hallaton, Huncote, Kilby, Newton, Slawston, Swinford, Sketchley, and Whetstone. At some of these places the neighbouring ministers preach once on a Sunday.

The Dissenting pulpits in this county are often vacant. This is to be attributed to two causes; *first*, to the existence of a spirit of disunion and bickering among the Dissenters of Leicester; and, *second*, to the small salaries raised in most of the towns by those who still attend the meeting-houses. One of the Leicestershire Dissenters boasted that, “thank God, he had sat under the sound of the Gospel for fifty years, and it had never cost him one farthing.” This is a specimen of Dissenting liberality in this county. There are at present seven vacant pulpits, out of twenty-seven, in Leicestershire. There are no Dissenting ministers of any note among their brethen in this county at the present time.

Although several of the meeting-houses in Leicestershire cannot contain more than 300 persons, we will take the average at 350. Twenty-seven of these will, then, supply ac-

commodation to 9,450, out of 215,855 souls ;— deficiency, 206,405. Yet the Dissenting ministers of Leicestershire will hold three meetings in 1842 to congratulate each other on their successes, or perhaps on their defeat.

LINCOLNSHIRE.

This county is without an association of the Congregational churches. Yet “Isaac Watts” labours at Boston ; Mr. Marjerum at Great Grimsby ; George Amos at Gonerby ; and Mr. Todman at Louth. There is a very bigoted, ill-tempered, Congregationalist minister at Grantham, named “*Soper*,” who opposes every Church effort, whilst he holds some office in the local association of the British and Foreign Bible Society. We have heard much of his aversion to the Church, and of his bitterness of feeling towards those who are opposed to Congregationalism.

The county of Lincoln covers an area of 2,611 square miles ; has 705 parishes, townships, &c. ; 73,038 inhabited houses ; a population of 362,717, and yet only twenty-nine Dissenting meeting-houses. Of these twenty-nine, three are at Lincoln. Dissent dates as far back as 1720, at Stamford ; and the “causes” at Alford, Brigg, Gainsborough, Pinchbeck, and Sleaford, likewise belong to

the eighteenth century. Nowhere in Lincolnshire can Congregationalism be said to be prosperous, except, perhaps, at Lincoln, where Zion Chapel has Mr. Gladstone ; High-street Chapel, Mr. Campbell ; and Newland Chapel, built in 1840, Mr. Bergne, for their pastors. The meeting-house at Barrow is supplied by students ; that at Market Deeping is looking out for a pastor, the pulpit being vacant ; and that at Whetheredge is in the same condition. The Lincolnshire Dissenters will themselves admit that it is not to that county that reference can be made for the success of the voluntary principle ; and so ashamed is the " Congregational Calendar " of 1842, of their Lincoln brethren, that it takes no notice of them. Divided into every imaginable difference of opinion upon all questions, both temporal and spiritual, connected with religious subjects, they supply meeting-house room only to 6,000 persons, out of a population of 362,717 ;—deficiency, 356,717. We have estimated the number at 6,000, because we *know* something of the attendance at the *little* meeting-houses in this county. But, to show our fairness, we will take the average attendance at 300 at each of the twenty-nine places of worship : and still the numbers will be but 8,700 ; and the deficiency, 354,017.

MONMOUTHSHIRE.

Monmouthshire being originally a Welsh county, though now reckoned as a part of England, the language of each country is spoken, and consequently there are among the Dissenters distinct Congregational meeting-houses for the natives of each. The Monmouthshire Association of Independent Ministers consists of fifteen "causes;" namely, Abergavenny, Brecon, the "old Interest" and the "new Interest" at Cardiff, Carleon, Chepstow, Gamderris, Lanvaccos and Nebo, Lanvaply and Ragland, Monmouth, Merthyr, Hope Chapel at Newport, and the Tabernacle at Newport, Pontypool, and Usk. Three of these are beyond the bounds of the county. The twelve English meeting-houses have five village places of worship having no pastors. There is an association of Welsh Independents, of which the pastor, Hugh Jones, of Tredegar, is secretary; and the little conventicles, sprinkled here and there, are thirty-three in number. The average attendance at each of these thirty-three small Welsh conventicles cannot be estimated fairly at more than two hundred, nor at the seventeen English meeting-houses at more than two hundred and fifty, at the outside. The total attendance will be 10,850, out of a population of 134,349.

The county of Monmouth covers an area of 496 square miles ; contains 145 parishes, townships, &c., 24,880 inhabited houses, and a population of 70,608 males and 63,741 females. This extraordinary deficiency in the *female* population of Monmouth is a curious fact connected with its statistics. In almost every other county the female population preponderates.

The English Association of Monmouthshire Independents joined the Congregational Union of England and Wales in 1835. Mr. Thomas Loader, the Dissenting minister of Monmouth, is the secretary. It is a curious fact, that the Dissenting ministers in this county are, with three or four exceptions, all uneducated men ; and it is also not less true that the Welsh Dissenters, who are put down by the *Congregational Magazine* as Independents, are, generally speaking, Calvinistic Methodists, or followers of Lady Huntingdon or George Whitfield. The insertion of so many little "village chapels" undoubtedly tends to swell the list, and make it look more respectable ; but the "Congregational Calendar" has confined its Statistics to the *bonâ fide* Dissenters, and the number is therefore much smaller.

At Abergavenny, where Mr. Bunn, formerly a Hoxton student, officiates as pastor, English

Dissent dates as far back as 1700 ; and at Penmain, the Welsh Methodists or Dissenters, or a confusion of both, had a conventicle at the same period ; but, with these exceptions, Methodism and Dissent in Monmouthshire belong to the nineteenth century. For a long period of time the Anglo-Cambrian Church was too much neglected. It did not effect as much for the Welsh as the English Episcopal Church did for the English ; and superstition was mixed up with the piety of some, and fanaticism with the religion of others. At the middle of the eighteenth century, and even at its close, Wales was deplorably benighted. Public morals were at a low ebb. The poor could not read. Gluttony, drunkenness, and licentiousness, very generally prevailed. The pulpits were badly filled. Many of the clergy were worldly-minded and corrupt. The Sunday sport, called “*ach-waren-gamp*,” in which all the young men of the neighbourhood had a trial of strength, and the people assembled from the surrounding country to see their feats, was rather encouraged than repressed by the idle and inattentive portion of the clergy. In some places, particularly in summer weather, the young men and women had what they called *singing eves*, *i.e.*, they met together and diverted themselves by singing songs in turn to the Welsh harp, till the dawn of the Sunday.

In other places they employed the Sabbath in dancing and singing to the harp, and in playing tennis. Everywhere, on the Sunday, sports were to be seen ; and in summer, interludes were performed, gentlemen and peasants sharing the diversion together ; whilst the “bobgerded,” or walking people, used to traverse the country, begging with impunity. The efforts of the celebrated Rev. Griffith Jones, Rev. Daniel Rowland, and Mr. Howell Harris, led indeed to a better state of things ; but instead of conforming to the Church and introducing spiritual life within its walls, they became sectarians, and divided their attention between attacking the deplorable state of public morals in the principality, and attacking the Church itself. The Rev. Mr. Rowland was the apostle of Welsh Methodism, and his influence was undoubtedly prodigious. His irregularity as a minister of the Church of England was, however, generally admitted, and no discipline was possible if the Church allowed all his measures and countenanced all his plans. On the other hand, it was not sufficiently borne in mind that the churches were not numerous enough to contain even half the population, and that therefore out of door preaching became the less unjustifiable. The appointment of *English* bishops (often wholly ignorant of the Welsh

language) to Welsh bishoprics was likewise an evil. The Welsh and English characters are vastly different ; and no real fellowship could exist between people who could not speak the same language, and who constantly viewed every question from an opposing point. At the present day this evil is *partially* met, and the bishops of the Welsh Church are men to whom can be safely entrusted the spiritual interests of that portion of the British population. But Calvinistic Methodism, much more than Independency, has gained such hold of the affections of the lower orders, in consequence of the long neglected state of the Anglo-Cambrian Church, that both in North and South Wales a very large portion of the inhabitants are separated. How comes it, then, where the voluntary principle has so large and free a scope for action, it should not have supplied adequate means of religious worship ? It is because that principle, under even the most favourable circumstances, is insufficient to meet the wants of a whole population. The state of Separatism in Wales, notwithstanding the immense and peculiar advantages in its favour, is one of the most striking proofs which can be brought forward of the insufficiency of Voluntaryism to the spiritual wants and necessities of every great nation.

LETTER V.

THE Dissenters have proposed a new geographical division of England and Wales for "*denominational* purposes." What does this mean? Let us look a little beneath the surface, and we shall see that the proposition originates out of a desire to hide "the barrenness of the land," or, in plainer terms still, to keep out of sight the weakness and the disunion of Dissent. The editor of the *Congregational Magazine* states that his object, in collecting some Statistics of Dissent, "*is not so much to supply facts wherewith to assail others*, as to record those which may enable us to understand our own circumstances, and improve them." It is well, indeed, for the editor of the *Congregational* that he has had the good sense to perceive that such Statistics, as the Congregationalists can now present of their forces, would indeed be very far removed from those which would enable the Independents and Baptists to assail the Church of England. But the editor of that Journal has a curious postscriptum to this avowal, which we do not hesitate to give at full length :—

"He ventures to hope that now the churches (read

Dissenting societies assembling at meeting-houses) will give themselves again to the edification and enlargement of the kingdom of their Lord and Master. It was during the long period in which statesmen, *unfriendly in their politics to religious equality*, were at the helm of England's Government, that our churches (read meeting-houses) multiplied greatly. Should such another period of political and ecclesiastical Conservativeism be before us, it will be the duty of Evangelical Protestant Dissenters, the editor humbly conceives, to preach freely and fully the doctrines of the Reformation—doctrines which, when faithfully proclaimed, will, blessed be God, always find a certain response in the hearts of the British people. Then will the churches (read meeting-houses) of Christ perform their own primary and proper business, and will be prepared to say, with Nehemiah, to any who would divert their attention from that imperative duty, ‘I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down; why should the work cease, whilst I leave it and come down to you?’”

This is the language of the Congregationalist Dissenters, made use of by their accredited organ, and so made use of in January, 1842.

Now, without stopping to examine into all the fallacies contained in the paragraph we have cited, it is our duty to state that the Protestant Conservatives of Great Britain were never unfriendly to “*religious equality*,” but only to civil equality; and that the fact

that Dissenting congregations and Dissenting societies greatly increased during the "long period" in which they were "at the helm of England's Government," is the best possible proof that they enjoyed, to the fullest extent, that toleration for which such men as John and George Townsend, Robert Hall, and John Clayton were wisely and properly grateful. That more modern Dissenters should not feel such gratitude is to us no matter of astonishment. We were fully prepared for all the democratic movements of the modern Non-conformists ; and when we read such exhortations as the preceding addressed to the Congregationalists throughout the country, "to preach freely and fully the doctrines of the Reformation," because Sir Robert Peel (who has been the best friend of the moderate and peaceful portion of the Dissenters) and his colleagues are in power, we only exclaimed, "The Dissenters are always, then, the same. They have learnt nothing by experience, nothing from history ; but are still democratic, restless, and political."

But why is Dissent to be up and doing ? Why is this, and why are many other appeals made to the Congregationalists to arouse themselves ? It is because Dissent is diminishing, if reference be made, in their Statistics, to the

constant increase of the population. Dissenters do not augment in numbers in proportion to the increase in the general census of the nation. The Wesleyan Methodists are the only exception to the rule ; and, in a great many districts, this is due to the fact, that at least a portion of the Church prayers are read on the Sunday mornings. But the Independents, Baptists, English Presbyterians, Arians, Socinians, Quakers, Universalists, and other minor sects, do not keep up their numbers in anything like a proportion to the increasing population of the country. The more enlightened of their number perceive this, and the fact is allowed to transpire in even the pages of the *Congregational*.

Mr. Gawthorn, the Dissenting minister of Derby (no mean authority amongst the Congregationalists), has proposed a new geographical division of England and Wales for *denominational purposes*. Why has he done this? We repeat, to hide the barrenness and the nakedness of the Dissenting Statistics. England and Wales contain a surface of 57,552 square miles. The chief *civil* divisions are circuits, counties, hundreds, wapentakes, tythings, parishes, townships, liberties, &c. The ecclesiastical divisions are provinces, dioceses, archdeaconries, parishes, chapelries, and pe-

culiar. These divisions are no longer satisfactory to Mr. Gawthorn and the Dissenters. York is too large, and Rutland too small ; the shapes of the counties are ill-formed, run deeply into one another, and in some cases are isolated, and embedded in several other counties. These are the objections made by the Voluntarists to our geographical divisions ; and they go on to say—

“ If there be political reasons why the Government should continue the present awkward and unequal divisions and subdivisions which now exist, there is no reason why voluntary societies should be confined to them. The Congregational Union, the Baptist Union, the *Bible Society*, the various Missionary and other societies, might at once dispense with them, and adopt others incomparably better.”

Not to dwell upon the awkward sidesmen of “ the Bible Society ” in this paragraph, which is coupled with “ the Baptist Union ” and the *various other* societies, we must tell our readers that there is more in this proposed new geographical division of the country, “ for denominational purposes,” than at first meets the eye.

The Dissenters are at present controlled, in their off-hand statements of numbers and sums, by the parochial and county statistics of the Church and the Government. The po-

pulation of the country at large is known by the accumulated statistics of each county. The proportions of Dissent and Conformity in each county can thus be known and tested, and there cannot be any very material mistake. This state of things is unfavourable to Dissent, since county influence, education, family, learning, property, all have a bearing rather against than for the progress of Dissent. The Congregationalists say, "Let us get rid of these restraints upon us. Let us cease to be county men, and let us become district men, and run our associations into parts of three or four counties at once."

Mr. Gawthorn observes—"Let us altogether disregard the boundaries of counties: the sooner we disabuse ourselves of the prejudices and feelings which these antique and awkward figures have occasioned, the better we shall be prepared to adopt a more rational and convenient plan."

This plan is to divide England into thirty-three, and Wales into four districts, of course "well-shaped;" so that, "on an average, an English district should contain about 1,500 square miles, the side of such a square being about thirty-nine miles, and the diagonal about fifty-four."

Thus Congregationalism would escape both

civil and ecclesiastical examination, and the *Patriot*, the *Nonconformist*, and the *Congregational* would be able to make district reports, running into parts of parishes, parts of counties, parts of circuits, parts of provinces, and so on, and put forth estimates which could not be controlled or investigated. Now we do not ask for any better proof than this proposition, that Dissent is on the decline. The voluntary system cannot bear the light of truth, if investigated in the established and ancient civil and ecclesiastical divisions of the land. The Church and Dissent, with their varied supporters and disciples, can now be counted, and their relative forces ascertained. The Church is now alive to the importance of statistics. The Dissenters know this. The time has gone by when the Dissenting societies could pass off-hand resolutions, at *private* meetings, of the number and forces of Dissenters. Churchmen can now say to Dissenters, "Gentlemen, we know you. You are an active and enterprising faction; but you are not a party, for you are disunited, weak, and restless." The Dissenters know this, and they wish to get out of their dilemma. They propose doing this by resorting to new geographical divisions and by embarrassing Church statistics. This object, however,

they will not attain. No new system of denominational classification and district geography will defeat true Churchmen in their watchful attention to the efforts of Dissent; and as modern Nonconformists have not been successful in their efforts to smuggle Dissent into our rural parishes under the old-fashioned division of our land into *counties*, we will take good care, in the *Church and State Gazette*, to defeat or to expose any new-fangled or new-planned attempts for effecting the same object. From every part of the country, then, we invite plain, impartial Statistics of Dissent; not merely of the Congregational sects of Independents and Baptists, but the Statistics of Methodism, Quakerism, and every other "ism" which relies on the name and authority of man, instead of on the wisdom and truth of "the Church."

We must now proceed with our County Statistics, and go on to

NORFOLK.

This county covers an area of 2,024 square miles; contains 727 parishes, townships, &c.; has a population of 412,621; inhabited houses to the amount of 85,922; and yet (including two meeting-houses at Harleston, two at Stratton, and three at Norwich) has only thirty-

eight Dissenting meeting-houses. This is the result of nearly two hundred years' working of the voluntary principle in Norfolk!—for nearly two hundred years have elapsed since, in 1650 at Bradfield, in 1655 at Deriton, and in 1652 at Wymondham, this same voluntary principle erected meeting-houses in those places. And yet again we point to the result! Mark! There are 727 parishes, townships, &c., in Norfolk, and yet there are only thirty-eight Congregational meeting-houses—not more than one for every nineteen parishes. And again: there is a population of 412,621, and meeting-room, averaging the attendance at every meeting-house in the county at four hundred, for only 15,200 souls; leaving a deficiency for nearly 400,000 souls. We know of no county where the obvious and indisputable deficiency of the voluntary principle to meet the spiritual wants of the population is more strikingly developed than in the county of Norfolk.

It was in this county that Mark Wilks, sen., brother of Matthew Wilks, both followers of Lady Huntingdon, preached afterwards, for many years, as a Baptist minister. The conduct of his congregation to him in his declining years was one of many proofs of that want of love, union, and respect for the ministerial

office which ought to exist amongst all who profess to be followers of our Saviour. There is a Mr. Alexander at Norwich officiating at Prince's-street Chapel, who has a most untameable feeling against "the Church." Himself and Mr. Legge, the Dissenting minister at Fakenham, are the "great men of the county;" the latter has "a preparatory academy at Fakenham, for training young men for the work of the ministry," of whom the *Congregational* says, "whose occasional labours are *doubtless* useful in that part of the county." We doubt it much. It would seem, indeed, that some "new movement" in Norfolk is contemplated by the Independents and Baptists; but the association, established in 1814, has hitherto been a failure. "Some recent movements," we are told, "indicate that this association will rise to great efficiency." So says the *Congregational*; but if the Church shall raise her voice yet louder and stronger than usual in this county, the spiritual wants of tens of thousands will not be ineffectually met by the doling out, in districts far removed from each other, of small portions of the bread of life; but a great, generous, and universal supply will be distributed in every parish and district by the authorized dispensers of the word and the sacraments.

The present Dissenting ministers in Norfolk are chiefly the off-shoots from Hoxton and Highbury ; there are two from Wymondley, and two or three from Coward College. The old pulpit at Deriton, nearly two hundred years old, is vacant ; and, with the exception of Norwich, Thetford, and Yarmouth, the voluntary principle is at a great discount. The Norfolk Association of Independents did not join the General Union till 1841.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

This is another county where Dissent is indeed at a low, the lowest, ebb. Just imagine a county containing a quarter of a million of souls, with only accommodation, in the Dissenting meeting-houses, for somewhat less than 4,000!!! Just imagine a county, covering an area of 1,871 square miles, with 48,704 inhabited houses, with a population of 250,268, and with 492 parishes, townships, &c., yet provided with only twelve Dissenting meeting-houses, which do not receive altogether 4,000 hearers ! Mr. Archibald Jack preaches at North Shields, and Mr. William Campbell at Newcastle-on-Tyne ; and these are the Dissenting stars of the county : the rest are Homerton, Rotherham, and Yorkshire students. And this is the result of at least a century and a quarter of Dissenting operations in

Northumberland!—since the meeting-house at Horsley-on-Tyne was erected in 1720 : twelve meeting-houses in one hundred and twenty-two years! And yet we are required to believe that the voluntary principle is adequate to supply the spiritual wants of the whole land! The Dissenting ministers and their supporters in this county, being too few to form a separate association, have united themselves to that of Durham. A grand failure altogether. In this part of England it is the Church which teaches the people, and she teaches them well.

LETTER VI.

THE weekly journal named the *Nonconformist* is frequently in a passion with its own friends and supporters. Why is this? Is it that they are not strong protesters enough to please the conductors of this democratic paper? Or is it that these gentlemen, who would teach the Dissenters how to think, feel, and speak of the Established Church in these realms, know something more than the mass of Dissenters do of the decadence of Dissent, and are disappointed at the calm and imperturbable manner in which some of their exhortations are received? We are disposed to believe that to both of these causes may be traced the biting, bitter irony of the *Nonconformist*, when it speaks of the conduct of the pacific and respectable portion of Protestant Dissenters. The following specimen will suffice to illustrate our proposition. It is extracted from an article headed "Martyrdom," in the *Nonconformist* of the 1st of June :—

"There is, we fear, about the position of Dissenters at the present moment, an air of equivocation, neither

honourable to themselves nor becoming to the cause they represent. The objects they have pursued of late years have been so entirely matters of detail, so profound has been their silence respecting the great principle at issue between themselves and the abettors of an ecclesiastical establishment, as to have deceived many of their own supporters, and to have drawn forth from their reputed representative in Parliament an assertion that they had no desire to see the principle realized. Hitherto they have not succeeded in making either themselves or their cause intelligible to the community. As yet men hardly know where to find them, and hesitate whether to assign earnest efforts for a separation of Church and State to Radicalism or to Dissent—whether they spring from a political or a religious bias. We believe most men ascribe them to the former—insomuch that smooth-spoken Dissenters, who prove their charity by their utter indifference to principle, and who are more angry with those who choose to bear persecution than those who inflict it, are termed, by way of eminence, *religious* Dissenters.”

This is the language of disappointment as well as of anger. The truth is, that the *political* Dissenters have of late years become so violent, so democratic, and so unprincipled, that the “religious” Dissenters are afraid of them ; and we could name more than one Dissenting minister who, seeing that no Christian repose or calm Christian progress can be had or enjoyed, in Dissenting ranks, has encou-

raged his sons to study at our Universities, and to declare themselves in all respects Conformists. This fact may shock the *Nonconformist*, and add to its disappointment and vexation ; but it is one for the truth of which we pledge ourselves.—Let us now turn to the Statistics of Dissent in

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE.

This county covers an area of 1,016 square miles ; has 334 parishes, townships, &c. ; 40,903 inhabited houses ; a population of 199,061 souls ; and 41 Dissenting meeting-houses. The Congregationalists can date Dissent in this county as far back as 1662, at Kettering, where Andrew Fuller, one of the Baptist giants of more modern times, officiated, and whose pulpit is now occupied by Mr. Thomas Toller. At Ashley, Kettering, Kelsby, Northampton, Potter's Pury, Rothwell, and Wellingborough, Congregationalism existed in the seventeenth century ; and it undoubtedly is a matter of surprise to the Dissenters themselves, that, during nearly two centuries, so little progress should have been made, and that meeting-houses should only exist in forty-one parishes, townships, &c., out of three hundred and thirty-four ! The Northamptonshire Association of Dissenting

Ministers and their Congregations, is one of the oldest in the kingdom. Dr. Doddridge preached before it, at Kettering, on the 15th of October, 1741, his celebrated sermon "on the evil and danger of neglecting the souls of men," which he afterwards printed with an epistle addressed to "the associated Protestant Dissenting ministers of Norfolk and Suffolk." In addition to the forty-one meeting-houses we have mentioned as existing in this county, there are some rural barns where itinerants and students feel themselves qualified to preach to the small congregations which from time to time assemble. The Northamptonshire Association joined the Congregational Union of London in 1840. Mr. Benjamin Hobson, the Dissenting minister at Welford, is the secretary to the Association. Out of the forty-one meeting-houses in the county there are twelve without pastors, and five or six supplied with students regularly. The Dissenting academy at Newport Pagnel has supplied a considerable proportion of the present ministers in Northamptonshire ; but by far the greatest proportion have not received any regular Dissenting education. There are three meeting-houses at Northampton, and the same number at Wellingborough. Most of the other buildings are small ; and if we estimate the whole

forty-one at three hundred attendants on each place of worship, we shall far exceed, in our calculations, the number of actual worshippers. Thus, out of a population of 199,061 souls, Dissent provides for only 12,300 ;—deficiency, 186,761 ! Yet Messrs. Thomas and Henry Toller, Mr. Hobson, Mr. Slye, and Mr. Gallsworthy, the “tip-top” teachers of Dissent in the county, proclaim the efficiency of the voluntary principle.

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE.

This county is one in which Dissent is far from flourishing. Although its area covers but 837 square miles, it contains a population of 249,773 souls, has 50,541 inhabited houses, and 263 parishes, townships, &c. But Dissent has only 26 meeting-houses in 263 parishes, and many of these most thinly frequented. At Castle-gate Chapel, Nottingham, Congregationalism existed in 1655 ; but all the other Dissenting “causes” belong to the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries. The man of great note in this county among the Dissenters is the Rev. Richard Alliot, LL.D., formerly a Homerton student ; but why or wherefore he is a Doctor of Laws not even Mr. Alliot himself could tell us. In 1815 a society was formed by the Independent ministers in the

counties of Nottingham, Derby, and Leicester, to promote the spread of Dissent ; but as they could not agree with each other, and as the Dissenters in Derby and Leicester preferred separate associations, the Nottinghamshire Association was formed at Mansfield on the 16th of June, 1829. Of that Association Mr. Thomas Herbert, of Nottingham-park, is the treasurer ; and Dr. Alliott, and Mr. Arthur Wells, of Nottingham, are the secretaries. This Association joined the Congregational Union of London in 1832. The Association, both in its old and in its new condition, has been equally unsuccessful in its efforts to propagate Dissent : for, of the twenty-six meeting-houses, four are dependent on other places—*i. e.*, cannot support ministers themselves, but are obliged to rely on the Dissenting ministers at Newark, Mansfield, and Nottingham, for their spiritual instruction. Another place is entrusted to a lay town missionary ; and the pulpits of four meeting-houses in the county are also vacant. The *average* attendance at the Dissenting places of worship in this county, including the smaller meeting-houses, is really not two hundred ; but, that no complaint may be made, we will estimate them at three hundred : and still Dissent will only be found to supply the means of reli-

gious worship to 7,800 persons, out of a population of 249,773, or to *one* out of every thirty-two of the inhabitants of the county. This is the result of Dissenting efforts at the end of two centuries of evangelization ! That "Church-hater," Mr. Soper, of Grantham, Lincolnshire, is inserted in the "Congregational Calendar" for this year as belonging to the Nottingham Association. The reason for this is, that Lincolnshire is without a Dissenting association ; and Mr. Soper, who is one of the secretaries of the *Lincolnshire Bible Society* ! has so great a horror of the Church of England, and so zealous a determination to promote the spread of Voluntaryism, that he has connected himself with the association in this county. The union of the Church with Dissent on such a basis, in the Bible Society, will ere long be found and admitted to be untenable.

OXFORDSHIRE.

If the aspect of Dissent be inauspicious in Nottinghamshire, it is still more disastrous in Oxfordshire. This county contains an area of 756 square miles, a population of 161,573, inhabited houses to the number of 32,141, parishes and townships to the extent of 286, and yet only 22 meeting-houses, two of which are at Oxford, and several of the remaining twenty

very small and contemptible affairs. Dissent began at Whitney in 1700, and at Henley-upon-Thames in 1719; and yet, after more than a century and a quarter, the voluntary principle has only produced meeting-room for about 7,000 souls. The remaining 154,000 are not so much as thought of by the Oxfordshire Dissenters. The Oxfordshire and West Berks Association of Independent Ministers and Congregations was formed at Abingdon, in Berkshire, on the 8th of December, 1840, "to promote fraternal intercourse and mutual edification between the several ministers and churches," and "the extension of the Gospel by every scriptural and practicable means!" It consists at present of sixteen members, only nine of whom reside in the county of Oxford. Mr. Underhill, of Oxford, is the treasurer; and Mr. William Harris, of Wallingford, the Dissenting minister, is the secretary. Dissent in this county is next to extinct. It can scarcely support its ministers; and there are, out of the twenty-two places of worship, seven or eight without pastors. There is a violent enemy of the Church at Henley-upon-Thames—a Mr. James Rowlands, the Dissenting minister there; but he, and most of his Oxfordshire coadjutors, are uneducated men.

RUTLANDSHIRE.

Although Rutlandshire is a small county, it contains an area of 149 square miles ; has 53 parishes, townships, &c. ; with 4,297 inhabited houses, and a population of 21,340. Here, as elsewhere, the voluntary principle is inefficient in its operation, and bears no sort of proportion, in its supplies, to the means of religious instruction which are demanded. In this county there are but four meeting-houses, viz., at Oakham, Ketton, Uppingham, and Preson. That at Oakham was erected in the year 1727 ; that at Uppingham in 1717 ; whilst the two others belong to the nineteenth century. Thus, during upwards of one hundred years, Dissent was confined to Oakham and Uppingham, in this county ; and during a period of one hundred and twenty-five years only two new meeting-houses have been built. There can be but two answers to such facts as these. The *first*, that there were no Dissenters ; the *second*, that the voluntary principle is inefficient, sluggish, dull, not to be relied on, subject to all the caprices of the human mind, as well as to all its want of spiritual-mindedness. Indeed, to both of these reasons may be ascribed the circumstances we have thus referred to. Well may the editor

of the *Congregational Magazine* record, in sorrow and disappointment—"The small extent of this county, and the paucity of our churches, have rendered an association for it unnecessary. We wish, however, that the principle of union were recognized by the churches (read *meeting-houses*) associating by themselves, or with those of some border district." The truth is, that the *principle* of Congregational union is not believed in or adopted in Rutlandshire; and those who are now Dissenters are so simply because they have been brought up to be so. The four meeting-houses in this county will contain 1,400 souls, and no more, out of a population of 21,340;—deficiency, 19,940. Yet we are weekly told by the organs of Dissent that if the voluntary principle were left to itself, it would soon provide temples for religious worship for all the inhabitants of the country. Out with such balderdash as this! Why if the State did not provide for the religious instruction of the people of this mighty empire, nine-tenths of the population would become pagan. We say this advisedly. Nine-tenths would become pagan. They would not teach themselves: others would not teach them: and they would remain "without hope, and without God in the world."

SHROPSHIRE.

In this county Dissent is active, but not prosperous—bustling, but not successful. It has sought to make proselytes among the poor, and has established what it calls “cottage services.” At these cottage services, which are nothing more nor less than the cottages of the poor, registered for public worship, the same poor and their neighbours are instructed to believe “that the Gospel is not preached in the Church; that an open communion-table is wicked; that no one has the right of receiving the elements of that communion until he shall first have related his religious experience to his fellow-communicants, and been voted, *by a majority*, a Christian; and that the form of Church prayers used in the Church of England is a mere repetition of prayers not felt, and of doctrines not comprehended.” In one word, the “cottage services” are instituted by the Dissenters to attack, irritate, and annoy the Established clergy, and to gain proselytes to Congregationalism. In this county the Dissenters have also resorted to the erection of very small village and hamlet meeting-houses;—not to building places of worship in crowded towns and cities, where the paucity of churches might form an excuse for the

measure, if not render it desirable ; but they have gone to the villages of Shropshire—the hamlets of the county, where churches existed quite large enough for the whole population, and there they have engaged the farming-men and the small tradespeople to become preachers and teachers, and have promised that, occasionally, the “*great* ministers,” from Bridgenorth, Hales Owen, Oswestry, Shrewsbury, and Wellington, should come amongst them. By these means, aided by 220*l.* per annum raised to assist the Dissenting propagandism in old Salop, it has been hoped to increase, to a vast extent, the Shropshire Voluntaryists. But let us now see how far these efforts have been successful, and to what numerical results they have led.

Shropshire contains an area of 1,343 square miles ; 258 parishes, townships, &c. ; 47,203 inhabited houses ; and a population of 239,014. Now what are the means provided by Dissent for the inhabitants of this county ? There are forty meeting-houses, out of two hundred and fifty-eight parishes and townships. These forty meeting-houses average three hundred and fifty sittings, or rather three hundred ; but, that we may not be accused of unfairness, we will take the estimate at three hundred and fifty. Thus accommodation is pro-

vided for 14,000 persons. Then there are the twenty-nine village chapels, which we will admit to average an attendance of one hundred each, making 2,900 persons. Total, 16,900—say 17,000. The average attendance at each of the twenty-nine hamlet chapels is nothing like one hundred ; but we have preferred to make our estimate too high, rather than too low. So then, notwithstanding all the bustle of the “Salop Association,” formed nearly half a century ago (1796), and which joined the Congregational Union in 1832 ; and notwithstanding all the efforts of the great Salopian patron of Dissent, Sir I. B. Williams, LL.D., F.S.A., of Wem Hall, the treasurer of “the Association ;” and notwithstanding all the stir and activity of Mr. Thomas Weaver, the Dissenting minister and secretary, “the Congregational churches” in Shropshire only provide for the religious instruction of 17,000 souls, out of 239,014, or one out of fourteen of the total population of the county !

Nor can it be said that Dissent is of late growth in Shropshire, for it has existed at Bridgenorth since 1711—at Ludlow since 1736—at Wem since 1715—at Shrewsbury since 1767—at Ellesmere since 1780—at Market Drayton since 1775—at Dorrington since 1787—at Newport since 1766—and at Clive since

1797. No ; Dissent is not of modern growth in Shropshire : but it is not flourishing—it is not efficient.

The Dissenting institution at Caermarthen has supplied some of the ministers for Shropshire ; others have been educated at Rotherham, Hackney, and Gosport ; but the majority are uneducated, or self-educated, men. Yet with such materials the “Salop Association” proposes “to evangelize the county.” They are *bold* men, but they are neither wise nor prudent.

SOMERSETSHIRE,

Here we have a very large county, with a fine population and extensive opportunities for usefulness. Somersetshire covers an area of 1,645 square miles ; contains 488 parishes, townships, &c. ; has 81,632 inhabited houses ; and a population of 436,000.

The “Somersetshire Association” has existed for many years ; “and,” the editor of the *Congregational Magazine* adds, “has been instrumental in effecting much good. Almost every church (read *meeting-house*) has some village station connected with it. Of the chapels (read *meeting-houses*) enumerated in the following list, thirty have been built within the last twenty-one years. Most of the cha-

pels are well attended, and only few have debts remaining upon them, and they are not considerable. The Rev. Thomas Luke, of Taunton, is the secretary."

Before we enter upon the examination of this statement, and of the Statistics of Dissent in this county, we cheerfully pay our tribute of respect to Mr. Jay, of Bath, who has, we believe, uniformly conducted himself with respect and good feeling to the clergy of the Church of England.

With the exception of Mr. Jay, we are not aware of the existence of any Dissenting minister of great note through this county. In Somersetshire there are seventy-two Dissenting meeting-houses—some few very large, but a great number very small. At Lambrooke and Taunton, Dissent existed in the seventeenth century—at Chard in 1700—at Frome in 1707—at Chelwood in 1721—at Fulwood in 1705—at Kingsdon in 1710—and at Temple Coombe in 1700. All the rest belong to various dates, from 1740 downwards; and thirty have been built within the last twenty-one years.

The average attendance at these meeting-houses is three hundred: this is the outside; which, if multiplied by seventy-two, will give a total of meeting-house room for 21,600 in-

dividuals. Besides this there are fifty village and hamlet meeting-houses, which average at each an attendance of one hundred, or total 5,000. Thus Dissent supplies means of religious worship to 26,600 souls, out of 436,000. What is the proportion when compared with the population? Why only one out of seventeen. What would become of the other sixteen souls out of every seventeen, were it not for the Church of England? Wesleyanism would provide for a few unquestionably, and Socinianism and Quakerism for a few more; but undoubtedly fourteen out of every seventeen would be *wholly unprovided* with spiritual food but for the religious instruction supplied by the Church of England.

Many of the Dissenting ministers in Somersetshire have been educated at Highbury, Hoxton, and Coward College; but the majority are uneducated men.

STAFFORDSHIRE.

Staffordshire is one of the most populous counties in the British dominions, and nowhere does Dissent look more feeble or unsatisfactory than it does here. With a population of upwards of half a million to grapple with, it is inefficient, wholly so, in all its plans and movements. The county covers an area of

1,184 square miles ; has 239 parishes, townships, &c. ; 97,676 inhabited houses ; and a population of 510,206 individuals. Yet, in such a county as this, there are only forty Congregational meeting-houses, capable, in the whole, of containing 16,000 souls ; and leaving, therefore, a deficiency of meeting-house accommodation for 494,206 souls ! It will be observed that we have calculated each of the meeting-houses in the county as being capable of containing four hundred persons ; and we have done so because many of them are large, and because, as the deficiency of meeting-house room with reference to the population of the whole county is so great, we would not, by any calculation of ours, appear to increase that deficiency. Yet even of these forty meeting-houses we have to record that eight of the pulpits are vacant : thus showing that Dissent is not flourishing even in the places where it has established itself. At West Bromwich, Dissent has existed since 1700. This is the date of the erection of the oldest meeting-house in the county. From that year to 1764 no other Dissenting place of worship appears to have been constructed. That one was at Bilston. The next was at Wolverhampton, in Temple-street, in 1770—at Newcastle-under-Lyne, in 1777—at Gornal,

in 1778—at Queen-street, Wolverhampton, in 1780—at Hanley, in 1784—at Stone, and at Maresgreen, West Bromwich, in 1787—at Handsworth, in 1788; and at Cheadle, in 1799. All the other Congregational meeting-houses in Staffordshire have been erected from 1800 downwards. It was at Wolverhampton that the celebrated Dissenting strife took place relative to one of the places of worship in that town, where scenes of violence were enacted which disgraced both Dissent and Dissenters. The Dissenting Association of Staffordshire was formed in the year 1814, and it joined the Congregational Union of England and Wales in July, 1833. The income of the Association is 287*l.*, or 7*l.* per congregation. Mr. Hammond, the Dissenting minister at Handsworth, is the treasurer; and Mr. Galloway, the Dissenting minister at West Bromwich, is the secretary. The *Congregational Magazine* says, “The Association prosecutes the instruction of the people with much energy.” We must really take the liberty of denying the accuracy of this statement. What! is it *energetic*, then, only to have erected seven meeting-houses in the whole county during the period of the last twenty-five years? Is it *energetic*, only to raise for the purposes of the Association 287*l.*

from forty congregations and sixteen thousand attendants? Is it *energetic*, to leave 494,206 individuals wholly unprovided, by them at least, with the means of religious worship, out of a population of 510,206? Is it *energetic*, out of two hundred and thirty-nine parishes and townships, to have planted meeting-houses only in thirty-seven? No; the Dissenters of Staffordshire have not proved themselves to be *energetic*, but have shown a want of confidence in their own principles. Many of the Dissenting ministers in this county are uneducated men. Those who have been brought up at any Dissenting institution have been instructed principally at Hackney, Highbury, and Rotherham. The ministers of note among the Dissenters are not to be found in this county: there are very few of more than even second-rate Dissenting talent. The Wesleyan Methodists are much more successful with the colliers and miners all over England than are the Dissenters; but the Statistics of Wesleyan Methodism we do not profess to give in these Letters.

SUFFOLK.

This county covers an area of 1,515 square miles, has 508 parishes, townships, &c., which contain 64,081 inhabited houses, and a popu-

lation of 315,129 souls. For the religious worship of all this mass of beings, Dissent has only provided thirty-nine meeting-houses, many of which are small, and eight of which thirty-nine are situate in Bury St. Edmund's, Ipswich, Sudbury, and Woodbridge. So that only thirty-five parishes out of 508 have any Congregational meeting-houses in them. This is one way of testing the state of Dissent. Every parish in the kingdom has a church. Some have several. But not one out of ten has a meeting-house. And when it has, how few will it contain when compared with the churches. This, then, is the broad and clear line of distinction between a religion which is national, and one which is sectarian. We do not state this as any matter for wonder or astonishment, but only as a fact which is not sufficiently kept in view by the Dissenters, when they exaggerate, as they do, in their resolutions at their public meetings, and in their petitions to the Legislature, their own numbers and their own importance.

Dissent dates as far back as 1646 at the meeting in Whiting-street, Bury St. Edmund's. There are also several other meeting-houses in the county belonging to the seventeenth century. For example, those at Walpole and Wrentham were built in 1647—that

at Rendham, in 1650—at Woodbridge, in 1651—at Beccles, in 1652—at Sudbury, in 1662—at Wattisfield, in 1678—at East Bergholt, in 1689—at Ipswich, in 1686—at Lavenham, in 1697—and at Southwold, in 1695. There are fifteen meeting-houses belonging to the eighteenth century ; the rest have been built during the last forty years. The Suffolk Independent Association of Ministers has existed many years ; and Mr. Wallis, the Independent minister of Sudbury, is the secretary. Its income is small, and its efforts far from considerable. There is a Suffolk Mission Society in aid of foreign missions, which was founded in 1817 ; but, although it professes general principles and an attachment to all missionary societies, it forwards all its contributions to the London Missionary Society.

Of the thirty-nine meeting-houses existing in Suffolk, there are many which we know to be small, and very few indeed are either large or crowded. Still we will take the average at 350 seats, and if we multiply that number by thirty-nine, we shall find that Congregationalism only provides the means of religious worship for 13,650, out of a population of 315,129 ;—deficiency, 301,479. This is a true, but a deplorable, picture of Suffolk Dissent. Mr. Dewhurst, the minister at Whiting-street,

Bury St. Edmund's, is one of the great men among the Suffolk Dissenters. Formerly a Mr. Wray, of Sudbury, was much looked up to, but he has been some years dead, and his pulpit is now occupied by a Mr. Wallis, who was educated by Dr. Pye Smith, at Homerton. Dissent is stationary, if not retrograding, in this county ; although at Ipswich, Beccles, and Woodbridge, there are some zealous anti-church-rate brawlers.

SURREY.

Although the county of Surrey only covers an area of 759 square miles, it has a population of 532,613 souls. Its parishes, townships, &c., are 150 in number, which contain 95,375 inhabited houses. In our Dissenting Statistics of this county we do not include Lambeth, Rotherhithe, or Southwark ; since we have already given these in our accounts of the metropolis and its boroughs. In Surrey, Dissent is eminently meagre : it has but forty places of worship, and a great many of these are small stations, supplied by students of Dissenting theology at Highbury and Homerton.

The *Congregational Magazine* tells us that "a general meeting of ministers, and other Christian gentlemen, was held at Lower Tooting, on the 1st August 1797, when the Surrey

Missionary Society was formed, to promote, by the preaching of the Gospel and other approved methods, religious knowledge in the least favoured districts of the county. This Society, as such, 'is identified with no party.'"

Very likely not with any peculiar *Dissenting* party, but at any rate it is composed of the disciples of Voluntaryism. This amalgamation of Dissent Society has four districts, with one minister in each. These stations include twenty-one villages, in the whole of which, according to the admissions of Dissenters themselves, only 1,300 persons attend public worship, and only 130 receive the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, or are, to make use of Dissenting phraseology, "in Church fellowship." This Society has seven Sabbath-schools, containing only 254 children, under twenty-four teachers. Its income in 1840 was 570*l*. With this 570*l*. it has to support four ministers and seven schools; so that the pastors of this Society must indeed enjoy only "red herring livings."

Immediately connected with this county mission is the Surrey Congregational Association, which joined the Congregational Union in 1831. Mr. Connebee, of Dorking, and Mr. Richards, of Wandsworth, the two Dissenting ministers in those places, are the secretaries,

The absence of stated ministers at many of the Dissenting meeting-houses in Surrey is one of the curious facts connected with Dissent in this county. For example, at Banstead, and at Beddington, students preach ; at Charlwood there is no pastor ; at East Sheen the same ; at Elstead the same ; Grimshall is a mere station of the County Society, and has, of course, no regular pastor ; Haslemere is without a minister ; at Merton, students preach ; at Mortlake, the pulpit is vacant ; Normandy, Oxted, Pain's-hill, Perry-hill, and Worplesdon, are mere county stations ; whilst at Streatham and Wimbledon, students and "various supplies" preach ; and the pulpit at Tooting is vacant. This is the condition of the forty meeting-houses in Surrey. Only twenty-four out of the forty have stated pastors. Dissent existed at Dorking and at Epsom in the seventeenth century ; but in all other places it is of much more modern growth. The Dissenting colleges at Highbury, Gosport, Homerton, and Hoxton, have supplied nearly all the ministers in this county.

As a vast majority of the forty Dissenting meeting-houses in Surrey are small, we cannot average the attendance at more than 350 for each building, which will give a total of

14,000, out of a population of 582,613 ;—deficiency, 568,613 ! Such facts as these need no comment !

SUSSEX.

John Styles and John Hunt, the former at Brighton, and the latter at Chichester, were once two of the pillars of Sussex Dissent. Then it was that John Styles wrote his essay on “the Stage,” and obtained from some Scotch or American college the diploma of Doctor. Then it was also that he wrote the “New Covering to the Velvet Cushion,” in reply to the “Velvet Cushion” of the Vicar of Harrow. His *fidus Achates*, John Hunt, was less learned, but not less noisy, than his contemporary ; and all Sussex rung with accounts of their very extraordinary eccentricities. Since that time *Doctor* Styles has settled down at Clayland’s Chapel, Clapham-road ; and his faithful friend John Hunt is the pastor of Union Chapel, Brixton-hill. We allude to these gentlemen because Sussex has become much less dissenterish since their departure, and because they serve as an illustration of the oft-repeated truism, that if the people of this country, especially in rural districts, were let alone, they would be abundantly satisfied, instructed, improved, and edified by the mi-

nistrations and services of the authorized clergy of the Church of England.

The county of Sussex covers an area of 1,466 square miles; contains 315 parishes, townships, &c.; has 54,066 inhabited houses; and a population of 299,770. In this large county, containing only 230 short of 300,000 souls, Dissent is in a most flagging condition. The following list of the places of Dissenting worship now vacant will at once show what we mean by "flagging:"—

Alfriston	vacant.
Ardingley	held with Lindfield.
Arundel	vacant.
Billinghurst	vacant.
Bognor	vacant.
Boreham	vacant.
Burwash	vacant.
Cocking	vacant.
Crawley	vacant.
Emsworth	vacant.
Horsham	vacant.
Hollingby	vacant.
Lewes (Cliffe Chapel)	vacant.
Lurgasall	vacant.
Newhaven	vacant.
Rudgwick	vacant.
Seaford	vacant.
St. Leonard's	vacant.

Watersfield vacant.

Wisborough-green . . . vacant.

Wivelsfield vacant.

Yokehurst vacant.

There are altogether forty-two places of worship of Congregationalists in Sussex, and of these only nineteen have pastors. Thus, out of three hundred and fifteen parishes, townships, &c., only forty-two have a Dissenting meeting-house; and out of a population of 300,000, the voluntary principle only provides means of worship for 12,600 persons. And when we say 12,600, we estimate the average attendance at each meeting-house at three hundred; whereas we are certain, from what we know of Sussex, that an average of two hundred would be much more accurate. Even at Hastings, during the season, Mr. Davis (who is a very respectably-conducted man) does not have a congregation of three hundred; and at Rye, Mr. Willmore would be happy indeed if he could count one-third of the number. The salaries of the Dissenting ministers in Sussex are extremely low, and did not most of them obtain an addition to their incomes, either in trade, or from schools kept by themselves or their wives, they would really be unable to live.

The testimony of Dissenters themselves is,

however, more valuable than that of any other witnesses ; as to it no reasonable objection can be made. Let us mark, then, the following pithy sentences in the *Congregational Magazine* of January last :—"The Sussex Congregational Society for the Diffusion of Religious Knowledge was formed in 1822, since which time 1,582*l.* have been subscribed for that object. Its present state is *very unsatisfactory*. The Rev. James Edwards, of Brighton, is the secretary."

Thus, in twenty years, forty-two congregations have subscribed 1,582*l.* ! This amounts, on an average, to not quite 2*l.* per annum from each congregation ! This is a sample of the zeal of Sussex Dissenters since John Styles and John Hunt used to hunt down the poor to become Congregationalists. There is now no man of eminence in Sussex among the Dissenters. The meeting-houses are not half full : those who attend, do so from habit, or from education ; and the churches are gaining daily from the thinning ranks of the Voluntaryists. Dissent dates at Brighton as far back as 1662. How little progress has it made in the course of 180 years !

WARWICKSHIRE.

Two of the great pillars and props of Dissent are the pastors of very large congregations

tions in this county, and in the same town, Birmingham. We allude to John Angell James, the minister of Carr's-lane meeting; and to Timothy East, who has a coadjutor named Raven, at Ebenezer Chapel. It must not, however, be supposed that these two gentlemen, *i. e.*, Mr. James and Mr. East, pull together, or have only a Christian rivalry as to who shall do most good : far from it : they themselves, their deacons, clerks, pew-openers, are all in a state of demi-hostility to each other. Mr. James is looked on as the gentleman, Mr. East as the democrat of Dissent in Birmingham; and the sarcasms of both towards each other are anything but brotherly. Timothy East was of mean origin; is still viewed in that light by the *aristocratic*! Dissenters of Carr's-lane; and is a great lover of tobacco-pipes well filled with tobacco. He is a political Dissenter; a vehement and impassioned enemy of all Church Establishments; and an universal suffrage man in his views of civil government. His opponent (for so is John Angell James considered) has pursued a more respectable course, though his enmity to the Church of England is scarcely less decided; and Mr. James has contrived, by pleasing manners and by able extempore preaching, to collect together a large congregation of money-getting people. The congre-

gation of Timothy East is quite as large as that of his rival, but his supporters are principally shopkeepers. The rivalry of both parties prompts them to great exertions on behalf of the Bible Society and the London Missionary Society ; and those who have been behind the scenes have been not a little amused at the manner in which each party watches the other and exhorts to increased exertions, "in order that Carr's-lane may not be beaten by Ebenezer Chapel ;" or, on the other hand, to adopt the phraseology of Timothy East, "that it may never be said that a chapel devoted to Ebenezers has been beaten by any other."

Warwickshire contains an area of 897 square miles ; has 246 parishes, townships, &c. ; contains 81,445 inhabited houses ; and a population of 402,121.

This county, including the towns of Birmingham, in which there are five meeting-houses, Coventry, in which there are three, and Nuneaton, in which there are two, can only boast of fifty-three Congregational places of worship : so that there are not more than one out of every five parishes having even one Dissenting meeting-house. Some of these meeting-houses are, doubtless, large—such as those at Birmingham, Coventry, Leamington,

and Warwick. But the great majority of the fifty-three buildings are far from being large, and many of them are without regular and stated pastors. There are sixteen out of the fifty-three supplied with "various" preachers—some instructed, others uninstructed—some students, and others tradesmen.

"The Warwickshire County Association (says the *Congregational Magazine*), of which the Rev. R. M. Miller, of Atherstone, is secretary, was formed in 1793—re-organized in 1818. Four home missionaries are employed in the county, besides about thirty gratuitous agents engaged in village preaching, who visit about eighteen stations. Its annual income is *very small* (120*l.*), when the number and respectability of the churches (read *meeting-houses*) are considered. Twenty-four chapels have been erected in the villages and small towns of this county within the last twenty years! This Association joined the Congregational Union in 1831."

So fifty-three meeting-houses in Warwickshire, with "respectable" congregations, raise amongst them 120*l.*—about 2*l.* 7*s.* each—to carry on the work of county evangelization! And in the course of twenty years, twenty-four little huts (for they are no better) have been run up for Dissenting worship! This is a proof, at once striking and memorable, of the little confidence Dissenters in Warwick-

shire have in their own voluntary principle. In fact, they have no confidence at all. For that there are wealthy Dissenters in Warwickshire is indubitable—men who could give their thousands of pounds, if they were convinced that they were acting right in doing so. But the truth is, that the Warwickshire Dissenters, like many others in other counties, are not quite satisfied about the voluntary principle, in which they have been educated, and are, in many cases, preparing to join the Church of England. We do not speak of the followers of Messrs. East and James, but of those country congregations where they are not perpetually stimulated on the subject of Dissent.

In Warwickshire, Dissent dates as far back, at Bedworth, as 1686 ; but it, and Stretton-under-Fosse, are the only places of worship belonging to the seventeenth century. Only eight meeting-houses belong to the eighteenth century. So that forty-three belong to the nineteenth ; that is, to the last forty-two years.

With respect to the number of persons provided for, out of a gross population of 402,121, by the Congregationalist meeting-houses of Warwickshire, we think the account must be thus taken :—Ten meeting-houses, 1,000 each, 10,000 ; five meeting-houses, 500 each, 2,500 ;

ten meeting-houses, 300 each, 3,000 ; twenty-eight meeting-houses, 200 each, 5,600. Total, 21,100. We are sure we have much overstated the whole attendance, although at *two* meeting-houses the attendance is greater than what we have mentioned. So that, to meet the fact of a population of 402,121, we have provided by Congregationalist Dissenters meeting-house accommodation for 21,100 ! and no more. When it is remembered that such men as James and East are at the head of Dissent in the county of Warwick, and when it is recollected how deep an interest they take in the voluntary principle and its success, it must be admitted by all parties that no better proof can be given, than that, in spite of all the vehemence of party men and of political Dissenters, there exists in the minds of the mass a deep-rooted conviction that the Established Church of England is indispensably necessary to the existence and growth of religion in this country.

LETTER VII.

“WE have heard it remarked with sorrow (says the *Birmingham Advertiser*), by more than one devout Dissenter, and by at least one devout Dissenting minister, that their body had lost more in character and influence by the agitations which certain restless spirits among them had excited, than they could possibly have gained thereby in political influence and in power. This truth every Churchman will readily acknowledge; and every Churchman whom their conduct in this respect has not so soured that he can no longer look upon them as ‘Christian brethren,’ will acknowledge it with pain.

“Some years ago the followers of those Nonconformists who asked for nothing but ‘freedom to worship God’ in their own way, without interfering with the vested rights of others, were a respectable and influential body. They were respected on account of the sacrifices they made for conscience sake; and their character gave them an influence which was both felt and acknowledged. Now, as a body, their influence is gone. The political turbulence which has latterly been so rife among them has manifested their weakness, and worked off in effervescence the spirituality of mind on which their influence in society was founded: and thus they have become ‘fallen! fallen!’

while the Church of England is shining forth with renewed splendour, breaking forth on the right hand and on the left, and 'lengthening her cords and strengthening her stakes' throughout the land.

"This is, *we* doubt not, the effect of the political union between the 'Evangelical' Dissenters and the 'deniers of the Lord that bought them.' But now, forsooth, the union from which so much evil has flowed appears to be dissolved. The 'Evangelicals,' it would seem, saw that the ground they occupied was untenable, and the product of their convictions has been an '*Evangelical* Voluntary Church Association.' Yes, when the political virus has extended to the whole body, they dissolve connection with those from whom they have caught the infection; but, alas! the disease seems more violent in many of the new patients than it was in the old ones, for the virus has acted upon the zeal for which they were always remarkable, and thus brought evil out of good.

"Most of our Birmingham readers will be aware that these remarks have been excited by an attempt to extend to this town an association which has been remarkable for the enmity it has manifested towards our national religious establishments. The walls of the town have during the past week been plentifully placarded with an announcement, that on Wednesday evening a public meeting would be held in the Town Hall, when a lecture would be delivered by the Rev. John Burnet, explanatory of the objects of the '*Evangelical* Voluntary Church Association.' We must acknowledge that Mr. Burnet is a fit representative of

this society. It is not the first time he has visited Birmingham. Some, at least, of our readers will remember that years ago a Rev. John Burnet, of Cork, ne who at least seemed to be a zealous *Protestant* Dissenting minister, obtained subscriptions here—some of them from Churchmen and Church clergymen—in aid of the ‘church’ of which he then was minister. The transformation of the then Rev. John Burnet, of Cork, into the present Rev. John Burnet, of Camberwell, is a fair type of the transformation of the Protestant Nonconformity of former days into that political Dissenterism which now seeks to widen the breach that unhappily exists between religious communities, by introducing this new ‘Evangelical’ society among us. Alas! that we should thus have to write of the successors of Howe, and Henry, and Baxter. We had hoped to see the day when Judah should no longer vex Ephraim, or Ephraim Judah; but that vision of peace is fading into greater distance.

“But are these ‘Voluntaries’ true to their own principles in opposing the rates and the tithes which were *voluntarily* given to the Church ages back? Are they not willing themselves to accept the support of the State when they can obtain it? Let the ‘Regium Donum’ answer. The annual grant from Parliament of public money is readily accepted by them, and doubtless would be if it were a hundred times as large. The *principle* against which they so strenuously protest is here acknowledged by them, the only difference being, that in one case they have to receive, and in the other case to pay. According to

the 'Annual Register' for 1839, the usual annual allowance to Protestant Dissenting ministers, and French refugee laity and clergy, is 4,500*l.* ; and that to defray the expense of nonconforming, seceding, and Protestant Dissenting ministers in Ireland, is 31,719*l.* *It is, indeed, an undeniable fact, a fact acknowledged by themselves, that, while these men are protesting against ALL State grants for religious purposes, TEN THOUSAND AND SEVENTY OF THEIR OWN MINISTERS in England and Wales have participated in these grants in three years. On this subject, then, we need not say more."*

We have quoted the whole of this article from the *Birmingham Advertiser* because it is intimately connected with our subject—the Statistics of modern Dissent. It shows us, that whilst that Dissent is uproarious, in its language and actions, against the Church of England, as well as against the principle of all Church Establishments, it yet consents to receive from the State an annual allowance, and is thus itself connected with that State. This is a curious and instructive fact, which Mr. Burnet would do well to remember.

We must now proceed to conclude our examination of Dissenting Statistics in England, and in our next Letter to examine those of North and South Wales, and thus terminate the whole subject. We shall begin with—

WESTMORELAND.

This county covers an area of 762 square miles ; has 32 parishes, townships, &c. ; contains 10,848 inhabited houses, and a population of 56,469 souls. In Westmoreland, Dissent is, indeed, at a very low ebb. One of its ministers, driven from a large manufacturing town for bad conduct, has sought refuge among the scenery of the lakes. There are but eleven Dissenting meeting-houses in the whole county. There is no association of Dissenting ministers, and therefore no connexion with the Congregational Union. There are but two settled pastors to all the eleven "causes;" and the whole of the meeting-houses in the county will not contain more than four thousand individuals—not that four thousand, or anything like that number, ever attend. Yet, at Ravenstonedale, Dissent existed in 1662—just one hundred and eighty years since—at the end of which period there are in the whole county eleven meeting-houses, and about four thousand Dissenters, including children ! Not another word is necessary !

WILTSHIRE.

There was a time when Mr. Mark Wilks, now the Anti-Church of England missionary at Paris, then a Nonconformist minister at Sa-

Salisbury, drove to town from that city, "as a piece of good fun and amusement," the Salisbury day coach; and his companions, John Hunt, John Styles, and a few others (all regularly ordained pastors), would put their heads together to devise means for plaguing Samuel Mills, Robert Steven, and other lay members of their society, who were less Dissenterish, and more Conservative, than themselves. Mr. William Williams, who then published the *Evangelical Magazine*, was one of their chosen chums; and Stationers'-court and its contiguous taverns resounded with their mirth and exuberant joy. From Salisbury, Mark Wilks got up to London, and thence proceeded to Paris, leaving the Wiltshire Dissenters to console themselves for the absence of one who had stirred up in them the unkind and bilious spirit of his afterwards published sermon on Nonconformity, to "hate" the Church, and everywhere to oppose it.

But, in spite of all the efforts of Mr. Mark Wilks and his former Wiltshire friends, Dissent in that county is not on the increase.

Wiltshire covers an area of 1,367 square miles; has 300 parishes, townships, &c.; contains 50,986 inhabited houses, and a population of 260,000 souls. Dissent may be dated in this county as far back as 1662, at West-

bury. Yet in one hundred and eighty years only sixty meeting-houses have been provided by "*the voluntary principle*," and some of them are so small that the sixty cannot be calculated to contain more than 15,000 persons. Thus, if "Congregationalism" were left to supply the spiritual wants of the county, 245,000 persons, out of 260,000, would be left without the means of religious worship.

The Wilts and East Somerset Congregational Union (for the county of Wilts could not raise a separate association) joined the General Union in London in 1831. Mr. Elliott, the Dissenting minister at Devizes, is the treasurer; and Mr. Mann, the Dissenting minister at Trowbridge, is the secretary of the joint association. The members of this association supply about fifty village huts, barns, and cottages, with what are called public instructors, where the poor are cautioned to "beware of the Church," much more than to beware of their sins, and where to be a Dissenter is made of far greater moment than to be a Christian. But though the system of proselyting be in active operation in this county, it does not succeed. The "causes" are very small; a large portion of the pastors are uneducated men; and very many respectable Dissenting families become every year

incorporated into the Church. Salisbury and her cathedral, exercise a powerful influence over the whole county, and Wiltshire becomes increasingly sound and orthodox.

WORCESTERSHIRE.

This is another of the counties where, as in Westmoreland, Dissent exists only in name. Yet at Kidderminster, in 1662, there was a Dissenting place of worship ; but in a period of one hundred and eighty years the voluntary principle has only provided thirteen meeting-houses for the whole county. Dr. Redford, of Worcester, formerly a Hoxton student, is the great man ! among the Worcestershire Dissenters ; and the second is Mr. Ashwell, the Dissenting minister at Bromsgrove.

Worcestershire covers an area of 723 square miles ; has 171 parishes, townships, &c. ; 46,962 inhabited houses ; and a population of 233,484. There is an association in this county called "The Worcestershire Association of Congregational Churches ;" but, as a proof of its utter inefficiency, it has only two preaching stations in all Worcestershire. To Sunday-schools it pays more attention ; but, out of a population of 233,484 souls, the voluntary principle only provides the means of religious worship for 3,500—leaving 230,000

unprovided for! Yet this, according to Sir Culling Eardley Smith, is to be the principle which is to regenerate the world.

YORKSHIRE.

Yorkshire is the last of the English counties; and its size, wealth, industry, and population, demand from us a somewhat long and proportionate notice.

The area of the whole county of York is no less than 5,836 square miles! It contains 613 parishes; has 307,372 inhabited, and 23,197 uninhabited, houses. The population of the whole county is 770,654 males, and 782,608 females; forming a gross total of 1,553,262.

“The extended bounds of this colossal county (says the *Congregational Magazine*), have led to the formation of several district associations, for fraternal, denominational, and home missionary purposes. 1. The Home Missionary Society, for the West Riding of Yorkshire, was formed at Wakefield in 1819. Its first year's income was 258*l.* 16*s.*; and its last 674*l.* 6*s.*; having raised, since its establishment, 8,890*l.* 15*s.* for the needy parts of the West Riding. By the last report it is shown that forty-one stations and seventy-eight out-stations are supplied by its agent, and that 2,450 children are taught in them by 590 gratuitous teachers. 2. The Hull and East Riding Association of Congregational Ministers and Churches (read *meeting-houses*), formed in 1838, is auxiliary to the Home

Missionary Society. Its income in 1841 was 285*l.* 3. The North Riding Association has existed for many years. In Yorkshire there are two important collegiate institutions—Airedale and Rotherham, whose students, together with those of a private seminary, for home missionary service, *must* accomplish great good."

This is, we think, somewhat meagre information relative to this "colossal county," where, however, in spite of the two "collegiate institutions!" whose students "*must*" accomplish "great good," there is by no means that virility in Dissent which some of the Dissenting periodicals would fain persuade us to believe. We must now, however, divide the county into its West Riding, North Riding, and East Riding, and examine Dissent and the voluntary principle in each.

1. THE WEST RIDING.—This is the great Dissenting Riding. In it are 142 meeting-houses; of which two are at Allerton, two at Barnsby, three at Bradford, two at Dewsbury, two at Doncaster, five at Halifax, two at Hickmondwike, two at Huddersfield, two at Kirk, eight at Leeds, two at Morley, two at Ovenden, two at Ripon, two at Sedbergh, eight at Sheffield, two at Sowerby, and three at Wakefield. These form a total of fifty-one, out of the one hundred and forty-two, leaving

ninety-one for other places, at each of which only one meeting-house exists. Although some of these ninety-one meeting-houses are very small, and others only half filled, yet we will take the average of the one hundred and forty-two meeting-houses in this West Riding at three hundred attendants, and this will provide us with a total of Congregational meeting-house room for 42,600 individuals. That no fault may be found, even by the most captious Dissenter, with these our Statistics, we will say that the Congregationalists in the West Riding provide means of religious worship for 45,000.

At Morley Old Chapel Dissent has existed in this West Riding of Yorkshire as long as 1650; and eight other places of Dissenting worship in this Riding also belong to the seventeenth century. A great many of the ministers have been educated at the Dissenting academy at Idle. The others principally received their instruction at Highbury, Hoxton, and Rotherham.

2. THE NORTH RIDING.—This is the least favourable Riding for Dissent: there are in it but thirty-two meeting-houses, of which many are small, and some very badly attended. At no town in the North Riding are there two Congregational meeting-houses. The minis-

ters in this Riding are not regularly educated men ; and several of the village meeting-houses are supplied with students from the Yorkshire Dissenting academies. Dissent in this Riding also can date, at Aldborough and at Ellingthorpe, as far back as 1658, and at Newton and South Cave likewise to the seventeenth century. The thirty-two meeting-houses we shall estimate as averaging an attendance of three hundred at each, or a total of 9,600 ;—say 10,000.

3. THE EAST RIDING.—In this Riding there are forty Congregational meeting-houses, of which two are at Bridlington, four at Hull, and three at York. The remaining thirty-one are at the same number of places—some very small, and others very large. At York, Mr. James Parsons preaches at Salem Chapel to large masses of listeners ; but there are few men among the modern Dissenters who can vie with him. His eloquence is as surprising as the rapidity of his delivery, and the voluntary principle is justly proud of enrolling him amongst its advocates. Dissent at Bridlington can date back its existence to the seventeenth century. There are fifteen out of the forty meeting-houses which have no pastor, but are supplied by students, or are connected with other places of worship which have a regular minister.

These forty places of worship we shall estimate as containing three hundred and fifty persons each, or 14,000 ;—say 15,000, to avoid all attempts at refutation.

We shall, then, have a total for the three Ridings as follows :—

West Riding—Congregational accommo-				
tion for				45,000
North Riding—Ditto	ditto	ditto	10,000
East Riding—Ditto	ditto	ditto	15,000
				<hr/>
Total				70,000
				<hr/>
Population of the whole three Ridings				1,453,262
Deduct Congregational accommodation				70,000
				<hr/>
Deficiency				1,383,262

Mind this fact—in Yorkshire there are ONE MILLION THREE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-THREE THOUSAND TWO HUNDRED AND SIXTY-TWO souls wholly unprovided for by the voluntary principle ; yet which principle asserts that it would, *if left alone*, evangelize the world.

LETTER VIII.

WALES.

IN the previous Letters on Dissenting Statistics which have appeared in the *Gazette* we have considered those of *England*; we now turn to the principality of *Wales*. For that portion of the United Kingdom we entertain the most sincere and heartfelt affection. We love its people and its mountains; its language, poetry, and music; its wild harp, and its floods and streams; its rocks and its hills; its fine woods and its pleasant pastures; its sheep-walks and its shepherds; and, above all, the honest, primitive, quiet, unostentatious, homely, generous, hospitable character of its provincial inhabitants. To such a country and to such a people we turn with unaffected pleasure; and although we regret to say that Calvinistic Methodism and Dissent, but principally the former, have made great inroads in the principality, yet we also rejoice to learn that, since the Anglo-Welsh Church has been better looked to, watched over, and understood, the Welsh have turned to the Episcopal

Church with far greater fondness, confidence, and love.

Wales is divided into the following counties, and possessed at the last census the amount of population affixed to each county, as well as the numbers of chapels and meeting-houses in the third column :—

Counties.	Population.	Number of Chapels and Meeting-houses.
Anglesea . . .	50,890	29
Brecon . . .	53,295	32
Cardigan . . .	68,380	38
Carmarthen . .	106,482	78
Carnarvon . . .	81,068	41
Denbigh . . .	89,291	29
Flint . . .	66,547	20
Glamorgan . .	173,462	70
Merioneth . . .	39,238	25
Montgomery . .	69,220	43
Pembroke . . .	88,262	54
Radnor . . .	25,186	4
Total . . .	911,321	463

Before we offer any observations with reference to these Statistics, it is necessary that we should enter into some explanation with respect to Dissenting sects in the principality. The *Congregational Magazine* publishes no other intelligence respecting them than a list

of the counties and the number of meeting-houses. We must seek, therefore, elsewhere for the materials necessary for this closing Letter.

The founder of Welsh Dissenters is said to have been John Penry, who studied at both Universities, took the degree of M.A. at Oxford, and preached in both the seats of learning. He afterwards returned to his native country, changed his religion, and raised the standard of Dissent. His end was much to be deplored, for he suffered death in the year 1593 for his principles. In 1620 a Mr. Wroth followed in his footsteps. He was educated also at Oxford, and was appointed rector of Llanfaches, in the county of Monmouth. Being ejected from his rectory he preached in the fields, and in the year 1639 formed a Dissenting society in the very same Llanfaches where he had been rector.

Next followed William Erbury and Walter Cradock, both of Oxford, who raised the standard of Puritanism at St. Mary's, in Cardiff, of which the former was vicar, and the latter curate. Their conduct led to the ejection of both from the Church. They then went about the country as itinerant preachers, and their biographers say that their labours were remarkably successful. Vavassor Powell,

a man afterwards much celebrated, and Morgan Lloyd, were among their converts. On the breaking out of the civil wars, Erbury, Cradock, and Powell, with their principal adherents, few in number, fled to England. They afterwards returned to Wales; and an act of the Parliament in the year 1649, for the propagation of the Gospel there, was the cause of a great addition to the number of their fellow-labourers. James Bennett, in his history of the Dissenters, says—"So considerable was their progress, that, though at the commencement of the civil wars there were not above two or three Nonconformist churches in the principality, before the restoration there were upwards of twenty, and some of them so numerous as to contain more than five hundred members." Many of the ministers ejected in Wales by the Act of Uniformity were doubtless men of learning, who set up schools, and were otherwise useful in diffusing knowledge among the rising generation. By the revolution they were restored to security and peace; and at the close of that period of their history the number of Dissenting congregations increased to forty-three. This number will be found to be considerable if attention be not paid to the then state of the Anglo-Welsh Church in that country, as well

as to the general depraved and sunken condition of the whole population. But when it is remembered that the religious education of the people was at that time by far too little attended to by the clergy, it should not excite astonishment that the display of anything like zeal for their spiritual improvement should be met by corresponding feelings on the part of the Welsh themselves. It cannot also be denied that the persecution to which the Welsh Nonconformists had been subjected had been favourable to the progress of their principles; and that Dissenters in those times in Wales had far better reasons then to give for their nonconformity, than the political Dissenters of the present day. In fact, they were, at least, in Wales, rather "irregular Churchmen," like Wesley and Whitfield in a subsequent period, than organized and systematic separatists.

The progress of Dissent in Wales from the revolution to 1803 is as follows:—

SOUTH WALES.

	Presbyterian Congregatns.	Independent Congregatns.	Baptist Congregatns.
Brecknock . .	0	14	13
Cardigan . .	9	16	11
Carmarthen . .	2	46	36
Glamorgan . .	7	36	23
Pembroke . .	0	25	19
Radnor . .	0	4	5
	<hr/> 18	<hr/> 141	<hr/> 112

	Presbyterian Congregatns.	Independent Congregatns.	Baptist Congregatns.
Brought forw.	18	141	112

NORTH WALES.

Anglesea . . .	0 . . .	10 . . .	11
Carnarvon , . .	0 . . .	13 . . .	13
Denbigh . . .	0 . . .	13 . . .	12
Flint	0 . . .	8 . . .	1
Merioneth . . .	0 . . .	16 . . .	3
Montgomery , .	0 . . .	15 . . .	9
<hr/>			
Total . . .	18	216	161

Most of the Presbyterians in the northern counties, and some in London, considered themselves, in 1808, as of the order of the Church of Scotland; and there were then upwards of twenty of their congregations Scotch seceders. Nearly a hundred of the congregations of Baptists were at that period General Baptists, and twenty Sandemanians.

Thirty years afterwards, *i. e.*, in 1838, Dr. James Bennett, the great Dissenting authority on all these matters, thus wrote:—"Thirty years ago the Independents had only seventeen chapels in the six northern counties of Wales; of these, all but two have been enlarged, and one hundred and fifty-seven new ones have been built. In the principality, indeed, the progress of Dissent has been so great that the Establishment is reduced to the state of a West India regiment whose officers have no troops!"

In 1836 the *Congregational Magazine* pub-

lished the following Statistics of Welsh Dissent:—"Wales, North and South, 1,091 congregations." But in 1842 that same *Congregational Magazine* has become more discriminating; and, instead of jumbling together a diversity of sects, in truth *opposed* to each other, it has confined itself to Congregationalism, and has recorded that there are four hundred and sixty-three congregations of Brownists, or Independents.

That the Independents in Wales are zealously attached to their principles, or to their party, it would be absurd to deny, in the face of the fact that, in 1834, Congregationalism raised in Wales 18,000*l.* towards paying off a debt of 30,000*l.* due on their meeting-houses. The Congregational Board of London, therefore, gave special sanction to an application to *English* Dissenters, by which the Dissenting congregations of the principality were assisted to discharge the remainder of the debt.

The Calvinistic Methodists in Wales have not, as in England, furnished additions to the Independent congregations. They keep themselves apart, and preach always in the Welsh language. Their ministers are noisy, vehement, declamatory, and excite their congregations to external acts of emotion, either real or affected. Some of their preachers are, however, most eloquent in their addresses, and their imagery, borrowed always from nature, is singularly wild and original.

The Dissenting seminaries in Wales for the education of students in Nonconformist prin-

ciples and dogmas are, first, at Bala ; second, at Newaddlwyd ; third, at New-town ; fourth, at Penwayne ; fifth, at Carmarthen ; sixth, at Pont y pool. At some of these, Socinianism and Arianism have made great progress ; and even Messrs. Aspland, and Rees, and Lindsay, have at different times preached in Independent meeting-houses, on the anniversaries or other festivities of their heterodox, or demi-heterodox, institutions.

It is by no means easy to arrive at a satisfactory statistical result with reference to the comparative amount of Dissenting meeting-house room with regard to the total population in the principality. The following are some of the reasons :—1. The Independents and Calvinistic Methodists are not kept, in Dissenting Statistics, sufficiently distinct. 2. The Independents claim a great many more meeting-houses as their own than really belong to them. 3. The Baptists fall into the same error. 4. A very great many of the places of worship set down in Dissenting calculations as regular meeting-houses are little better than small registered barns. 5. A very great number also are exceedingly small, and very thinly attended.

We shall, however, act upon the principle of all our Letters. We shall take the accounts of the Congregationalists as given by themselves to be true, and therefore shall conclude that there are 463 places of worship belonging to that body. Of these, we will take 263 as containing 300 each, and 200 at 200 each.

The total is as follows—118,900 provided for, out of 911,321. It is clear, therefore, that Dissent in Wales is prodigiously strong, though we believe most truly that Episcopacy is becoming yearly more imposing and attractive.

We have thus drawn to a close our "Statistics of Dissent." "Nothing extenuate, nor aught set down in malice," has been the rule we have followed. We have been styled by the *Inquirer* "the enemies of Dissenters." This is an incorrect allegation. We are enemies to no men; but only to bad principles. We maintain that it is the *duty* of a Christian Government to provide for the religious instruction of the lower classes; and, in fact, for the whole community. We maintain that no voluntary sects and unauthorized societies of private individuals, unconnected with the Government of the country, either can or will supply the means for this instruction. And we have shown, by the Statistics of Dissenters themselves, that the voluntary principle in this country is wholly inadequate to that supply. For the present, our labours are terminated. We respect pious and conscientious Dissenters: we blame and regret the increase of political Dissent: and we invite all to consider the facts, that *there is such a thing as schism*, and that schism is not a mistake, but a *sin*.



